

2 held for swapping blood samples of minors accompanying teen driver  
Sanjay Kumar

Pune, August 20: Police have arrested two persons in connection with the alleged swapping of the blood samples of minors who were with the juvenile accused in the Porsche car crash case of Pune, a top official said on Tuesday. The arrested duo included the father of one of the two minors who were with the 17-year-old driver when he rammed his speeding Porsche car into two IT professionals on a motorbike on May 19 in Kalyani Nagar. With the duo's arrest late Monday night, the number of persons held in the Porsche car crash case has gone up to nine. "The blood samples of two minors who were with the juvenile accused in the car (at the time of the crash) were swapped with those of these two (arrested) persons, who included the father of one of the minors," Police Commissioner Amitesh Kumar said. The arrested men were on Tuesday produced before a local court that sent them to police custody till August 26. The high-end car driven by the minor allegedly under the influence of alcohol knocked down two motorbike-borne IT professionals, one of them a woman, in the wee hours of May 19, killing both of them.

## Protests near Mumbai over sexual abuse of 2 girls at kindergarten

ST Correspondent

Mumbai, August 20: Police lathi-charged protesters at Badlapur railway station near Mumbai on Tuesday evening to break the day-long rail roko agitation against the alleged sexual abuse of two girls at a kindergarten. Police used force to disperse hundreds of protesters at around 6 pm, hours after they hurled



stones at the railway station while rejecting pleas of the state government and senior police officers to call off the agitation, which affected the services of local trains and forced diversion of some outstation trains, an official said. The local train traffic remained affected for hours on a Central Railway section in the Mumbai Metropolitan Region as demonstrators, including many women, stayed put on tracks throughout the day. They demanded capital punishment for the arrested attendant of the school. The tracks at Badlapur station were finally cleared of demonstrators after 6 pm, the police official said. In the wake of the protest, police and RPF personnel were deployed in large numbers at the railway station and the school, which was vandalised by protesters earlier in the day. Angry parents of the schoolchildren and local citizens, including several women, gathered outside the school on Tuesday morning and also resorted to a 'rail roko' protest at the railway station, blocking the path of local trains from around 8.30 am. Some of the protesters, including women, later damaged the school property by breaking its gate, window panes, benches and doors, police said. At the railway station, some of the agitators hurled stones during the protest. Meanwhile, Deputy Commissioner of Police, Zone IV, Sudhakar Pathare, told reporters that a case had been registered against the accused, who was nabbed "within three-and-a-half hours of registering the FIR". He said three police officers, including two women, are gathering all evidence to ensure a comprehensive probe.

## Several Delhi hospitals receive bomb threat emails, search operations underway

New Delhi, August 20: Several hospitals, including AIIMS and Safdarjung, and a mall in Delhi on Tuesday received bomb threat emails, prompting authorities to launch searches on their premises, officials said. A call was received at 1.04 pm from a hospital in Nangloi and another from Primus Hospital at 1.07 pm in central Delhi's Chanakya Puri informing that they had received bomb threats, a Delhi Fire Services official said. Fire tenders, bomb detection teams and police rushed to the spots. A thorough checking is being conducted, the official said. The mailing list mentioned around 50 government and private hospitals, including AIIMS, Safdarjung, Apollo, Moolchand, Max and Sir Ganga Ram hospitals, police said. "We have placed many explosives inside our building. They are placed in black backpacks. The bombs are set to go off in a few hours," the email, sent through Gmail at 12.04 pm, stated. "You will end up in a pool of blood, none of you deserve to keep living. Everyone inside the building will lose their lives. I incessantly have nothing other than scam for humanity. Today will be your last day on earth," it said. The email claimed that a "group named 'COURT' is behind this massacre".

## Centre's U-turn on lateral entry; UPSC cancels ads

Navdeep Singh Sahni

New Delhi, August 20: After the Centre's request, the UPSC on Tuesday cancelled the latest advertisement for lateral entry recruitment to bureaucracy, according to an official order. Under attack from the Congress-led Opposition and its own allies LJP and JD (U) for advertising 45 government posts without the benefit of Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe and OBC quotas, the Government on Tuesday rolled back the plan to induct private sector specialists to key central positions asking the UPSC to cancel the lateral entry advertisements issued on August 17. "It is important that the constitutional mandate towards social justice is upheld so that deserving candidates from marginal communities get their rightful representation in the government services. Since these positions (the ones advertised by the UPSC) have been treated as specialised and designated as single cadre posts, there has been no provision of reservation in these



issued on August 17. This step would be a significant advance in the pursuit of social justice and empowerment," Minister of State for Personnel Jitendra Singh said in a letter to UPSC chairman Preeti Sudan on Tuesday. The minister also recalled the history of the lateral entry plan saying it as a principle lateral entry was endorsed by the second Administrative Reforms Commission, which was constituted in 2005 and chaired by

Congress veteran Veerappa Moily. "The recommendations of the sixth Pay Commission in 2013 (under Congress led UPA) were also in the same direction. However before and after that there have been many high profile

cases of lateral entrants. Under earlier government posts as important as secretaries in various ministries, leadership of UIDAI, have been given to lateral entrants without following any process of reservations. Further it is well known that the members of the infamous National Advisory Council used to run a super bureaucracy that controlled the PMO," Jitendra Singh said in his letter. The minister added that while most of the major lateral entries before 2014 (when Narendra Modi became PM) were made in an ad hoc manner, "including cases of alleged favouritism, efforts of our government have been to make the process institutionally driven, transparent and open." "Further the PM is of the first belief that the process of lateral entry must be aligned with the principles of equity and social justice enshrined in our Constitution, particularly concerning the provisions of reservations.

## West Bengal Governor calls on President Droupadi Murmu

New Delhi, August 20: West Bengal Governor C V Ananda Bose on Tuesday called on President Droupadi Murmu at the Rashtrapati Bhavan here. The meeting comes amid the cease-work agitation by junior doctors in West Bengal to protest against the alleged rape and murder of a trainee doctor which entered the 12th day on Tuesday. Healthcare servic-



es at state-run hospitals across West Bengal have been severely affected due to the agitation. "Governor of West Bengal Dr C V Ananda Bose called on President Droupadi Murmu at Rashtrapati Bhavan," the President's office said in a post on X and shared a picture of the meeting.

## 7 dead, 6 injured as auto-rickshaw rams into stationary truck in MP's Chhatarpur

Chhatarpur (MP), August 20: Seven persons, including a one-year-old child, were killed and six others injured after an auto-rickshaw rammed into a stationary truck from behind in Chhatarpur district of Madhya Pradesh early on Tuesday, officials said. The accident took place under the Civil Line police station limits when the rickshaw was going towards Bageshwar on Khajuraho-Jhansi highway around 5 am, a police official said. "Thirteen persons were travelling in the auto-rickshaw and seven of them were killed while six others injured after the vehicle collided with a truck on Jhansi-Khajuraho Road," Superintendent of Police (SP) Agam Jain said. The victims were going from Mahoba (in Uttar Pradesh) to Bageshwar Dham in Chhatarpur, he said. Sub Divisional Magistrate (SDM) Akhil Rathore said that as per the initial information, the CNG-run auto-rickshaw rammed into the stationary truck from behind. Three seriously injured persons are being referred to Jhansi for further treatment, he said. The deceased were identified as auto-rickshaw driver Prem Narayan (46), one-year-old Asma, Janardan Yadav (45), Manu Srivastava (25), Govind Srivastava (35) and Nanni Bua (42) and Lulu (age not known), the officials said.

## Maharashtra Assembly elections Why Ajit Pawar is being 'watched closely'

Tejinder Kaur Babbar

Chandigarh, August 20: Not so long ago, the BJP had embraced Ajit Pawar of the Nationalist Congress Party in the hope of improving political chances and opportunities with the belief that his breakaway faction would become a strong pillar of the NDA alliance in the key state Maharashtra. While the performance by the Ajit Pawar faction in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections proved otherwise, some of his recent statements appear to be indicating issues beyond the usual seat-sharing ones in the state slated to go to polls later this year. They indicate attempts at "image change" and perhaps also woo back/reach out to uncle and NCP founder Sharad Pawar. They are being "watched closely" by the BJP, which believes that Ajit Pawar is considering a "ghar wapsi" to his uncle's faction. However, NCP (SP) leaders suspect the statements to be a part of a "strategy" to change his image ahead of the upcoming Assembly elections.

  
may be able to sustain better in the race if he runs with Sharad Pawar than against him. "Breaking a party that Sharad Pawar worked for and walking away with the name and symbol has not gone down well with NCP

sus," the former Congress chief said. Congress general secretary in-charge communications

supporters, which include minority communities as well," the observer adds. He may not have brought much to the table in the Lok Sabha, Mahayati's fears are that if he returns to his uncle's fold he will do more harm to the saffron side. If he goes back to Sharad Pawar it will be with the original party name and symbol. The fact is, even without the original party name and symbol, the Sharad Pawar faction managed to do decently well in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections and getting them back will add to perceptions and augment chances. Deputy CM Ajit Pawar took everyone by surprise when he admitted having made a mistake by fielding wife Sunetra opposite cousin Supriya Sule in Baramati in the Lok Sabha elections. Then he said that he told the BJP not to target Sharad Pawar as PM Narendra Modi calling him 'bhakti atma' (restless soul) during the Lok Sabha campaign did not go down well with the electorate. Recently, he also said that he was not keen to contest from the Baramati Assembly constituency, according to reports.

## Power of Constitution can defeat 'dictatorial regime's arrogance': Congress on lateral entry U-turn

Naresh Malhotra

New Delhi, August 20: The Congress on Tuesday claimed that the Centre's move to withdraw the advertisement for lateral entry in bureaucracy was due to the campaign by party chief Mallikarjun Kharge, Rahul Gandhi and INDIA bloc parties, and said this shows that only the power of the Constitution can defeat the "arrogance of a dictatorial regime". Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi asserted that the Congress will protect the Constitution and the reservation system at all costs and foil "conspiracies" of the BJP. The remarks came after Union Minister of State for Personnel Jitendra Singh wrote to Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) chairman Preeti Sudan and asked her to cancel the advertisement so that marginalised communities get their rightful representation in government services. Reacting to the development, Kharge said, "Long live the Constitution! The Congress party's fight for social justice for our Dalits, tribals, backward and weaker sections has foiled the BJP's plans to snatch away reservation." "Modi government's letter on lateral entry shows that only the power

of the Constitution can defeat the arrogance of a dictatorial regime," the Congress chief said in a post in Hindi on X. He said it was due to the campaign run by Rahul Gandhi, the Congress and INDIA bloc parties, that the government has taken a step back. "But as long as the BJP-RSS are in power, it will keep adopting new tactics to snatch away reservation. We all have to be careful," Kharge said. "Whether it is the long term capital gain/Indexation attack on the middle class in the budget, or referring the Waqf Bill to JPC, or putting the Broadcast Bill on the back-burner - the power of the people and the opposition is saving the country from the Modi government," he said. In a post in Hindi on X, Gandhi said, "We will protect the Constitution and the reservation system at all costs. We will foil the BJP's conspiracies like that of 'lateral entry' at any cost." "I am saying it again - by removing the 50% reservation cap, we will ensure social justice on the basis of caste cen-

X, "A letter from a Union Minister working under a non-biological PM to a Constitutional authority without a date. What pathetic governance this is." "Even so, this is clearly the impact of the criti-

cism of the Leaders of the Opposition in both the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha and others," he said in another post. The UPSC had on August 17 issued a notification for recruiting 45 joint secretaries, directors and deputy secretaries through lateral entry - referred to as appointment of specialists (including those from the private sector) in government departments. The decision had ignited criticism from opposition parties, which claimed it undermined the reservation rights of OBCs, SCs and STs. The government's move also comes after BJP ally and Union Minister Chirag Paswan voiced concern over making any appointments in government posts without providing reservation. The political row over lateral entry escalated, with Congress leader Rahul Gandhi alleging it was an "attack" on the Dalits, OBCs and advisories. Upping the ante over the lateral entry issue, the Congress on Monday had accused the BJP of "snatching reservation" and handing out posts meant for SCs, STs, OBCs, and EWS to people of the RSS.

  
Jairam Ramesh tagged Singh's letter and said on X, "A letter from a Union Minister working under a non-biological PM to a Constitutional authority without a date. What pathetic governance this is." "Even so, this is clearly the impact of the criti-

## News box

## With no rain, city's maximum temperature touches 36°C

**Ahmedabad.** The maximum temperature went a notch higher on Monday at 36.1 degrees celsius compared to 35 degrees on Sunday. According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), it was 3.5 degrees higher than normal. At 27.2 degrees, the minimum temperature, too, was 1.9 degrees higher than normal.

According to the IMD forecast, the city gets light rains on Tuesday, but across the state, except parts of South Gujarat, chances of significant rains are very slim. On Monday, only 16 talukas received 1mm, with Khergam in Navsari receiving the highest at 27mm and Talaja in Bhavnagar receiving 26mm of rain. tmn

We also published the following articles recently: At 33.6 degrees, Mumbai records highest temperature for the month of August. On Sunday, Mumbai recorded its highest ever August temperature at 33.6 degrees, surpassing the previous high of 33.5 degrees in 1969. The city's break monsoon phase was identified as the cause, leading to increased heat and discomfort for residents. Ongoing dry conditions and weakened westerly winds contributed to this temperature spike. Clouds shift, Gurgaon to get scattered rain now: IMD. Rainfall in Gurgaon was expected to ease, with only isolated short bursts predicted over the next few days, as the monsoon trough shifted south. The city saw cloudy skies and muggy conditions with temperatures fluctuating. This year's rainfall was 26% higher than usual. Northern Haryana might face heavy rainfall soon. Rain streak continues, but intensity expected to drop in Delhi: IMD. New Delhi experienced sporadic rain in the morning and intense rainfall in the evening, leading to a drop in temperature. The weather department expected the rain to continue, but with reduced intensity on Friday and Saturday. Safdarjung recorded a maximum temperature of 34°C, and the city's air quality remained satisfactory with an AQI of 71.

## Couple killed as bus rams bike near Kelambakkam in Chennai

**CHENNAI.** A 53-year-old conservancy supervisor attached to the Mamallapuram Municipality and his wife, a school teacher, died when a private company bus rammed their two-wheeler near Kelambakkam in the wee hours of Monday.

Pallikaranai Traffic Investigation Wing police said Dhamodharan and his wife D Jayadurga (47) were heading to Mamallapuram from Madampakkam around 5 am when the bus rammed their vehicle from behind near Pudupakkam on the Vandalur-Kelambakkam road.

The driver sped away without stopping and passersby came to help the duo. However, they succumbed to their injuries on the spot. After analysing CCTV footage from the area, the police identified the bus and later arrested Kodeeswaran of Thiruvannamalai, who was allegedly driving the bus when the accident occurred.

## Kochi commuters call for MEMU between cramped Palaruvi, Venad Express

**KOCHI.** Lack of space, especially during peak office hours of 7am-9am, continues to plague train commuters travelling between Kollam and Ernakulam daily. Though the railways added four more coaches in Palaruvi Express, the situation remains the same. On Monday, passengers were unable to even enter Palaruvi Express and Venad Express, the two trains used by daily commuters to reach their offices in Kottayam and Ernakulam, said Ajas Vadakadam, executive member of Friends on Rails. He said a large workforce depends on the two trains to reach Kochi, the IT hub of Kerala. "Palaruvi is the first train towards Ernakulam from Thiruvananthapuram followed by Venad Express and then the MEMU," he said.

"Over 3,000 people are travelling to Tripunithura and Infopark from southern districts by MEMU, Palaruvi and Venad daily," said Sreejith Kumar, a representative of Friends on Rails, adding that it was worrying that people's representatives were not doing anything to resolve people's travel woes. Ajas said the addition of coaches in Palaruvi brought some relief but did not solve the problems on the Kollam-Ernakulam route. "On Monday, the train was crowded. Even the police were helpless even though standing near the doors is not allowed. Forget standing, people were clinging from the door handles," he said. A MEMU service will go a long way in resolving the issue, he said. "It can be operated from Kollam, and can start after Vande Bharat passes Kayamkulam. A temporary solution would be to run an urgent MEMU or passenger service from Kottayam to Ernakulam," Ajas said. Sreejith said if the said train leaves for Ernakulam from Kottayam at 7.45am, between Venad and Palaruvi timings, it will end passengers' woes to an extent. "If the Kayamkulam and Kollam services are extended once technical hurdles are cleared, travel issues can be resolved completely," he said.

# Tamil Nadu medical rank list out; cut-offs may go up

**With more students securing high scores this year, experts said the cut-off is likely to go up for all categories.**

**CHENNAI.** Health Minister Ma Subramanian released the rank list for MBBS, BDS, and paramedical admissions 2024-25 on Monday. Counselling for the courses will begin on August 21. With more students securing high scores this year, experts said the cut-off is likely to go up for all categories.

The general category merit list shows 90 students have scored above 700 this year, while the number stood at 39 last year. Similarly, last year, only 379 students scored 650 and above, but the figure has increased to 1,356 this year. This jump in numbers can also be seen in the merit list for the 7.5% quota (for government school students). The top score under 7.5% quota, which was 569 last year, has shot up to 669 this year.

According to officials from the selection committee, of the 28,819 applicants for government quota seats, 7,791 were freshers and 21,028 were NEET repeaters. Notably, all top 10 candidates on the merit list for the 7.5% quota are NEET repeaters, and four of them attended the Centre of Academic Excellence, Saidapet, a state-run NEET



coaching centre. Last year, the NEET cut-off mark for MBBS seats in government medical colleges for the open category (OC) was 602 and the general rank was 1,442; for the BC category, the cut-off was 551 and general rank was 3,539, and for the SC category, it was 448 and 9,431. General category counselling from Aug 21 for the SC (Arunthathiyar) category, the cut-off was

382 and general rank was 12,836, and for the ST category, 355 and 14,234. Speaking to reporters after releasing the rank list, Subramanian said that the counselling for special quota students, sportspersons, wards of ex-servicemen, persons with disability, and those availing the 7.5% reservation will be conducted offline at the Government Multi Super Speciality Hospital in

Ommandur Estate on August 22. Counselling for general category students will take place online from August 21. This year, Tamil Nadu has got an additional 150 MBBS seats, the health minister said. The state has applied for an increase in the number of MBBS seats in a few more medical colleges and is likely to get approval in the next academic year, he said. Of the 6,630 MBBS and 1,683 BDS seats available in government colleges, 496 MBBS and 126 BDS seats are reserved for government school students under the 7.5% quota. About 3,733 applications were filed for seats under the quota and 3,683 (1,041 boys, 2,642 girls) applications were found eligible. Overall, the state received 29,429 applications for government quota seats, of which 28,819 (10,704 boys, 18,114 girls) were accepted. Transwoman from Erode makes it to rank list Chennai: The health minister on Monday said that this year a lone transwoman has also made it to the rank list. Officials said she hails from Erode, completed class 12 in 2021 and cleared NEET

## Three kids dead due to food poisoning in Anakapalle PASA Trust hostel, 78 hospitalised

**VISAKHAPATNAM.** In a tragic incident, three children died and 78 others were hospitalised due to food poisoning at a hostel run by the Parusidhutma Agni Stuthi Aradhana Trust (PASA Trust) at Kailasa Patnam in Kotavuratala mandal of Anakapalle district. The deceased children have been identified as K Shradha (7) of Balabadrham village and T Joshua (7) of Nimmalapalem in Chintapalli mandal, and G Nithya (Bhavani) (8) of Rellala Palam in Koyyuru.

A total of 93 children consumed stale food on Saturday night. Of them, 78 have been admitted to various hospitals across the districts of Anakapalle, Visakhapatnam and Alluri Sitarama Raju. "We have admitted 78 children to different hospitals, even though some are in stable condition, as a precautionary measure. Since these students are from tribal areas, we have initiated the process to transfer them to various tribal schools under ITDA," said Paderu ITDA Project Officer V Abishek.

Anakapalle SP M Deepika said 35 children affected by food poisoning are currently undergoing treatment in hospitals in the district. She said all the children experienced varying levels of illness, with some being more severely affected, especially those with pre-existing medical conditions, who did not receive proper care, and that most of these children are under observation. A few children, who are in a more critical condition, have been shifted to the King George Hospital (KGH) in Visakhapatnam.

Among those transferred to the KGH, one girl is said to be in a very critical condition. Deepika also confirmed that three

students, who fell ill after consuming the food on Saturday, had died by midnight on Sunday. CM announces Rs 10L ex-gratia, asks officials to extend best aid to kids. Upon investigation, it was found that the PASA Trust is operating a hostel for tribal children, who reside there and attend school daily. Upon learning about the death of two children, we traced all the children, informed their parents, and ensured that the children were admitted to



the last two to three years. Deepika expressed concern over the inadequate accommodation, mentioning that the children were housed in a small shed with limited washroom facilities.

The police have arrested Kiran Kumar, administrator of PASA Trust, under Section 304 Part 2 (culpable homicide not amounting to murder) and Section 105 of the BNS for negligence. The SP revealed that Kumar brought tribal children to the hostel without proper permission, and failed to provide timely medical treatment to them, ultimately leading to the tragic deaths. Alluri Sitarama Raju Collector AS Dinesh Kumar, Anakapalle Collector Vijaya Krishnam and Visakhapatnam Collector MN Harendhira Prasad responded promptly to the food poisoning incident. They reached the hospitals, coordinating with district-level officials, police, education and medical departments to ensure emergency medical services were provided immediately.

CM Chandrababu Naidu expressed deep concern over the death of students and directed the Collector to ensure that the affected students receive the best possible medical treatment. He announced an ex-gratia of Rs 10 lakh each to the families of the three deceased children.

Home Minister Vangalapudi Anitha, who visited the affected children at the KGH, stated that an investigation is underway to determine the origin of the contaminated food and who brought the samosas. She emphasised the issue of religious teachings at such hostels, where parents are persuaded to send their children.

## Plan to relocate food stalls at Vastrapur lake fails again

**AHMEDABAD.** The civic body's attempts to reduce traffic congestion around Vastrapur lake have proven futile as the plan to relocate street food vendors has failed yet again. AMC not being able to find a permanent solution to the problem has caused much frustration among people.

The presence of a thriving food market, new residential projects and malls and multiplexes in the vicinity of the lake have led to a significant increase in traffic. For the past five years, the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation has been mulling shifting the eateries. The proposal to establish alternative facilities on two adjacent plots has been put on hold. In 2019, AMC officials planned creating a food court near Sanjivani Hospital to shift the vendors. The AMC proposed to allocate Rs 44.37 crore for development works under the Swarnim Jayanti Mukhyamantri Shaheri Vikas Yojana. However, this initiative was abandoned due to a change in the deputy municipal commissioner. The new DyMC had planned to establish a food court within the amphitheatre of the redesigned lake, to relocate the stalls. This food court was to also feature 55 stalls allotted to food chains. A plot near Sanjivani Hospital, valued at Rs 100 crore, was to be allotted for parking. However, in Aug, the standing committee blocked this proposal. The original plan to remove the lake's surrounding wall to improve its visibility, has also been revised. We also published the following articles recently: Zomato's AI-generated food images ban: Paytm founder has a views vs reality response Zomato CEO Deepinder Goyal announced the removal of AI-generated food images following customer complaints about misleading presentations. The effort aims to rebuild trust between customers and restaurants by encouraging genuine representations. Restaurant owners can contact Zomato's support team for authentic photo shoots. Mobility plan throws spanner in Metro expansion proposal Kochi's Metro rail project on the Edappally-Aroor stretch faced a setback as the city's comprehensive mobility plan (CMP) did not designate it as a mass rapid transit system (MRTS) corridor.

## Women 'resettle' for less as firms refuse jobs in Tamil Nadu: Report

**HC-appointed advocate commissioner's final report says factories in resettlement areas discriminate against women above 30 years**

**CHENNAI.** Even with various skill development courses offered to women in resettled families by the Tamil Nadu Urban Habitat Development Board, women aged over 30 are refused employment in companies or factories in the area of resettlement. This was revealed in Advocate Commissioner K Elango's final report on resettlement sites in the city. As per the report, women in the resettlement sites of Perumbakkam, Navalur and Gudapakkam underwent this ordeal. Calling it a 'major social issue', the advocate commissioner urged the state government and the HC to intervene and issue suitable advisories to the companies. "I am unable to understand on what basis those companies come to the conclusion that women aged above 30 are not productive and they are weak," the report stated. The advocate commissioner was appointed by the Madras High Court to file a revised report on resettlement sites in the city. Accordingly, he visited the sites in Navalur, Perumbakkam and All India Radio Nagar. In the concluding part of the report, the advocate commissioner called for the model of resettlement to be 'reconsidered'. Elango said the staff at Serpananchery



panchayat burial ground in Navalur were charging the resettled residents Rs 30,000 for each cremation even after the TNUHDB officials intervened. In the middle school, desks are only provided for middle-school students, while those in primary classes have to use the floor. There are three

balwadis in the area and all of them are run by helpers and have no teachers, the report said. In Perumbakkam, the advocate commissioner said that no steps were initiated to set up a de-addiction centre in the area despite the issue being pointed out in his earlier report in 2018. School-going children have free access to ganja, the report said. Residents in AIR Nagar complained that the medical officer visits the health centre only once a week. In the absence of the officer, a staff nurse diagnosed the patients' ailments and prescribed medicines. During his inspection of the health centre, he was told that the medical officer was on leave from May 29 to June 23. The resettlement site also stands in urgent need of an old-age home with medical care along with CCTVs and strengthened infrastructure. "Several of these issues are long-standing complaints. Resettlement of residents demands urgent action and expenditure from multiple departments. Therefore, the whole resettlement model must be reconsidered, to avoid future problems of lack of adequate facilities," report said.

## Telangana: HYDRAA leaves land grabbers trembling

**HYDERABAD.** The Hyderabad Disaster Relief and Asset Protection Agency (HYDRAA) is giving sleepless nights to land grabbers, realtors, builders and politicians. For the last 10 days, the HYDRAA has been on a demolition drive. Armed with bulldozers and other heavy-duty vehicles, the agency has been pulling down the buildings that have come up in the Full Tank Level (FTL) and buffer zones of the water bodies within Outer Ring Road (ORR) limits. As the demolitions are being carried out without any prior notice, the encroachers, builders and politicians are on the edge, not knowing whose buildings are next on the demolition list of the HYDRAA. In less than 10 days of HYDRAA swinging into action, more than 50 illegal buildings built in the FTL and buffer zone of the water bodies such as Osman Sagar (40), Chilkur in Moinabad

(7), Chanda Nagar in Serilingampally (3) Errakunta Cheruvu in Bachupally (3), Bum-Rukn-u-d-Dowla lake near Shivrampally, have been razed. The agency authorities are making sure that records of unauthorised buildings are thoroughly verified before carrying out the demolitions. After identifying them, men, machinery and police personnel are deployed during the early morning hours itself to pull down the structures. The HYDRAA is also keeping track of the unauthorised constructions in parks, layouts, open spaces, playgrounds, nallas and land parcels. The authorities said that, on an average, they are receiving 50-100 complaints per day from the people and they are being verified thoroughly before initiating action. Their main priority is removal of encroachments in the

surroundings of tanks within ORR limits. As per the data obtained from the National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC), Bala Nagar, between 1979-2024 (45 years), the extent of the water bodies in and around Hyderabad has diminished by 61 percent. There are 185 lakes within GHMC limits and 400 within ORR limits. Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy established the HYDRAA for Telangana Core Urban Region (TCUR) for the purpose of disaster management, asset protection etc. The wing will protect assets of ULBs and government such as parks, layouts, open spaces, playgrounds, lakes, nallas, land parcels, roads, carriageways, footpaths, etc from encroachments. Removal of lake encroachments is being done in coordination with the GHMC and local bodies concerned. Many people are appreciating the state government on social

media platforms for protection and recovery/restoration of lakes, nallas, kuntas. **THE SIKH TIMES**  
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## NEWS BOX

## Gurgaon: Burglars strike at parked car on MG Road, steal gadgets and 3,000 US dollars

**GURGAON.** Thieves targeted a Ciaz car parked on MG Road near MGF Metropolitan Mall and stole a laptop, 3,000 US dollars, and other valuables kept in a bag in the backseat. Police registered a theft case based on the complaint of the car owner. Mayank Jain, a private company worker from Sector 9A, went to MGF Metropolis Mall on Saturday night. "I parked my car on the service road of MG Road near the mall and went inside at 8.30pm. When I returned, I saw that the rear right side window glass of my car was broken, and the laptop bag kept inside was stolen. The bag contained my HP laptop, passport, and 3,000 US dollars," Mayank alleged in his police complaint. Based on the complaint, police registered a case under BNS Section 305 (theft in a dwelling house, means of transportation or place of worship, etc) on Sunday. "We will verify the CCTV footage at the crime scene and identify the accused soon," said head constable Anoop Kumar.

## Discom's charges against ex-official quashed by Punjab and Haryana HC



**GURGAON:** The Punjab and Haryana high court ordered quashing of charges against a retired DHBVN executive engineer and upheld a lower court's 2014 ruling that directed the discom to pay increments it had halted as a penalty. The case dates to 2005 when DS Hooda, then an sub-divisional officer in Dharuhera, was accused of causing financial loss to the discom by restoring power connection to a company that paid around Rs 53,000 of its total pending electricity bill of Rs 2 lakh. The discom framed charges against Hooda in 2006.

In 2008, the discom ordered two increments that Hooda was supposed to get be halted, and Rs 1.3 lakh be recovered from him. In a Nov 2014 ruling, a Gurgaon additional district judge said that Hooda was entitled to get back his increments along with interest at 9% per annum. DHBVN challenged this 2014 order before the high court, alleging that Hooda retired as an executive engineer in Feb 2011 and during his service, he was charge-sheeted in April 2006, which led to the stoppage of his two increments. Justice Suvir Sehgal of the Punjab and Haryana HC, in his order on Aug 6, upheld the district court's ruling. "The court does not find any illegality or infirmity in the judgment passed by the district court," the order read.

## Three pose as passengers, rob driver of his auto and mobile phone on Faridabad Road

**GURGAON.** Three men posing as passengers boarded an autorickshaw in Cyber City on Sunday and robbed the driver of his mobile phone and vehicle when they reached near Genpact Chowk on Faridabad Road.

An FIR has been registered, and police are trying to trace the suspects who fled in the stolen auto, an officer said on Monday. Dipankar Dey, who is from Guldalpur village in West Bengal, has been living in Nathupur in the city and working as an auto driver. He filed a complaint on Sunday evening at Sushant Lok police station. According to cops, the suspects first asked Dipankar to drive them to DLF Magnolias and then requested to go to Gwalpahari via Genpact Chowk.

"At 10.45 am, near building 9A in Cyber City, three men approached me for a ride to DLF Magnolias in Sector 42. Upon arrival, they asked to go to Gwal Pahari via Genpact Chowk. After passing the fire brigade office, they stopped the auto, claiming one of them felt unwell. Two got out, while the third grabbed my neck from behind. The others began kicking and punching me. They forcibly took my phone and pushed me out of the auto," the complainant recounted to the police.

A case has been registered under Section 309(6) (voluntarily causing hurt during robbery) of the BNS.

### Name Change

I, MUHAMMAD YOUSUF IQBAL ANSARI S/O MUHAMMAD IQBAL ANSARI residing at SHOP NO-1, FIRST FLOOR, SHAHZADA BAGH PHASE-1, INDERLOK, DELHI-110035 have changed my name to YOUSUF IQBALANSARI for all future purpose.

### Name Change

I, MERAJ S/O MUNNA residing at H- NO-313/8, TULSI NAGAR, DELHI-110035 have changed my minor son's name from AYAN SINGH to AYAAAN for all future purpose.

### Name Change

I, AMERA WO MEHMood residing at H- NO-313/105 F, 5th FLOOR, TARSALI, DADODARA, GUJARAT-390009 have changed my minor daughter's name from VAIBHAVAI YADAV to VAIBHAVI YADAV for all future purposes vide affidavit dated 2008/2024 before Notary Public, Delhi.

### Name Change

I, No. 1533/1579X HAVINOD KUMAR YADAV Father of VAIBHAVAI YADAV R/ O- 1380, SHARAD NAGAR, TARSALI, DADODARA, GUJARAT-390009 have changed my minor daughter's name from VAIBHAVAI YADAV to VAIBHAVI YADAV for all future purposes vide affidavit dated 2008/2024 before Notary Public, Delhi.

### Name Change

I, No-1517/15819N Rank-HAV Name-ANAND SASI residing at ILLIKU-LATHU CHITHRA, PORUVATHU, KOLLAM, KERALA-695020 have changed my Minor son's name from DEVANAND to DEVANAND R for all future purposes vide affidavit dated 13.08.2024 before Notary Public, Delhi.

### Name Change

I, Mahender Kasana S/o Shri Harjas Kasana R/o B-198, 3rd Floor, Chittaranjan Park, South Delhi, Delhi-110019 have changed my minor son's name from Gav Kasana aged 14 years to Ivaan Kasana for all future purposes.

### Name Change

I, SHIV KUMAR is legally father of No. JC-483633X Rank-NB SUB. Name-MAJEET KUMAR SINGH R/ O H. NO. C36, GOYLA DAHAR, PASEH-1, QUTUB VIHAR, SOUTH WEST DELHI-110071 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Sapna Devi.

### Name Change

I, Hitherto Known As MANJU DEVI W/O SHRI VISHNU YADAV R/ O H. NO. C36, GOYLA DAHAR, PASEH-1, QUTUB VIHAR, SOUTH WEST DELHI-110071 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Sapna Devi.

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### Name Change

I, SHIV KUMAR is legally father of No. JC-4

## News box

**Israeli strike targets Hezbollah site in Lebanon, 8 injured**

**Beirut.** An Israeli strike on Monday evening targeted a Hezbollah arms depot in Lebanon's eastern Bekaa Valley, the Israeli military said. The strike did not result in any fatalities, two security sources told Reuters. Lebanon's health ministry said of the eight injured six were Lebanese citizens and two Syrian children. The Israeli military said its air force struck a number of Hezbollah weapons storage facilities in the area of Beqaa in Lebanon. Following the strikes, secondary explosions were identified, indicating the presence of large amounts of weapons in the facilities struck, the military said in a statement. It said earlier strikes in Deir Qanoun and Tayibe south of Lebanon targeted a senior militant in Hezbollah's Rocket and Missile Unit and a cell operating from a Hezbollah military structure. Following the depot strike, the Lebanese Agricultural Scientific Research Authority said it would close its research stations in the Beqaa region as a precaution because unexploded missiles landed nearby. On Saturday, the Israel military said it targeted a weapons depot used by Lebanese armed group Hezbollah militants in an airstrike, killing at least 10 people including two children. In July, Israeli strikes also targeted another depot storing ammunition belonging to the Iranian-backed group in the town of Adloun in southern Lebanon, three security sources told Reuters.

Israel and Hezbollah have been trading fire since Hezbollah announced a "support front" with Palestinians shortly after it ally Hamas attacked southern Israeli border communities on October 7, triggering Israel's military offensive in Gaza.

**We're going nowhere': Thai opposition figure says court interventions must stop**

**BANGKOK.** Politicians in Thailand must reform the judiciary to prevent interventions that have the country "going around in circles", a recently banned opposition figurehead said, after two big rulings that dissolved his party and dismissed a prime minister. Pita Limjaroenrat, whose now defunct Move Forward Party was blocked from forming a government last year, said a 10-year political ban would not weaken his resolve to lead Thailand and start major reforms, including stopping independent institutions from being politicised.

Thailand has been trapped in a tumultuous two-decade cycle of coups and court rulings that have toppled multiple governments, as part of a power struggle between popularly elected parties and an influential establishment with powerful connections in the military and key institutions.

"It's back to square one and nothing has been achieved for the people," Pita told Reuters, reflecting on upheaval that saw Move Forward dissolved and Srettha Thavisin dismissed as premier in the space of a week, both by the same court. "We confuse movement with progress," he said. "It's almost like we're going around in circles and we're thinking we're going somewhere but actually we're going nowhere." His remarks came as 134 Thai academics and legal experts in a statement criticised the court, which they said overstepped its jurisdiction and damaged the public's trust in legal and democratic systems. Pita will return to Harvard University as a democracy fellow following his ban over his party's plan to amend a law that punishes royal insults with up to 15 years in jail, a campaign the court said undermined Thailand's constitutional monarchy.

**Minorities in Bangladesh being forced to resign, threatened to leave country'**

**DHAKA.** Although attacks on minorities have come down significantly in Bangladesh, members of the minority community are reportedly facing new challenges like alleged forced resignations, threats to leave the country, and rampant extortion. There have been reports of major changes in govt offices, autonomous bodies, schools and colleges amid reports that resignations of employees



belonging to the Hindu, Buddhist and Christian communities were secured under coercion. Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Oikya Parishad general secretary Rana Dasgupta told TOI that over the last couple of days he had got 10-12 complaints of minorities being forced to quit through threats and harassment. He said his outfit was ascertaining the veracity of the complaints. The lawyer said there are also growing cases of extortion with minorities being told that they will be forced to leave the country if money is not paid.

**Trump posts fake AI image of Taylor Swift endorsing him for President**

**Los Angeles.** Former President Donald Trump has posted a fake social media image of pop superstar Taylor Swift asking people to vote for him in the November election.

A Sunday entry by the Republican candidate on Truth Social showed Swift dressed in red, white and blue with a caption that said "Taylor Swift Wants You To Vote For Donald Trump."

"I accept!" Trump wrote.

Swift has not publicly endorsed a candidate in the 2024 race but has supported Democrats in the past. The singer backed President Joe Biden and running mate Kamala Harris in 2020. Harris is set to be formally nominated as the 2024 Democratic candidate at the party's national convention in Chicago this week. Swift also criticised Trump in a 2020 documentary. A spokesperson for Swift did not respond to a request for comment. Trump also posted photos of young women wearing "Swifties for Trump" shirts, and a satirical article with the headline "Swifties Turning to Trump After ISIS Foiled Taylor Swift Concert." The article was marked "SATIRE" above the headline.



Swift cancelled three shows in Vienna this month after authorities said they had foiled a planned attack. Local officials arrested a 19-year-old man who they said was inspired by Islamic State. Swifties for Trump is a massive movement that grows bigger every

single day," Trump campaign spokesperson Steven Cheung said in a statement when asked for comment about the fake Swift image. Several Swift fans and watchdog groups said many of the images posted by Trump appeared to be deepfakes generated

by artificial intelligence. Advocates in the music industry, Hollywood and Washington have been pushing for federal legislation and other measures to fight the explosion of fake AI images online. Trump's post was "yet another example of AI's power to create misinformation," consumer group Public Citizen said. "The potential harms to our society that could result from such misinformation, including abuses of our elections, are wide-reaching and immensely damaging," the group added. At the Democratic National Convention in Chicago, Swift fan Rebecca Goff handed out friendship bracelets, a common practice among the singer's fans, at a Nevada Democratic Party breakfast. Goff, 39, said she felt Trump was the antithesis of what she believes Swift stands for, including celebrating girlhood and womanhood. "That's like the antithesis of what Trump and the GOP are trying to do, especially to women. They're trying to make us smaller. They want us to go back to being just housewives, child bearers," Goff said.

**Kamala Harris thanks Biden for 'historic leadership': We are forever grateful**

**World** US Vice President Kamala Harris made a surprise appearance on the first day of the Democratic National Convention (DNC) in Chicago and expressed gratitude to President Joe Biden for his "historic leadership." "Thank you for your historical leadership, for your lifetime of service to our nation, and for all you will continue to do. We are forever grateful to you," Harris said at the DNC on Monday night. "I want to kick us off by celebrating our incredible President Joe Biden," she stated amid a cheering crowd. "Let us fight for the ideals we hold dear and let us always remember, when we fight we win!" Harris stated.

Biden, who stepped aside from running for re-election, will give a keynote address at the DNC later tonight. He is expected to make the case for electing Harris and defeating Republican nominee Donald Trump. Harris is the first black woman and Asian American to lead a major party ticket. She entered the convention with a radiant smile and unmistakable confidence, reflecting the support of nearly half the country — 48% — who hold a very or somewhat favourable view of her, according to a recent poll conducted by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research. Earlier this month, the vice president was officially confirmed as the Democratic nominee through a virtual vote, solidifying the party's unity after Biden withdrew from the race and endorsed her. As the campaign turns toward November, Harris expressed confidence in the collective strength of the nation, stating that people from all walks of life will "come together and declare with one voice, as one people: we are moving forward."

Harris is set to deliver her formal acceptance speech on Thursday night (IST).

## Democratic National Convention

The theme for the first day of the Democratic National Convention is "For the People." Former US President Barack Obama is scheduled to address the convention.

**Bangladesh authorities unfreeze ex-PM Khaleda Zia's bank accounts after 17 years**

**Dhaka.** UPDATED Tax authorities in Bangladesh on Monday decided to unfreeze the bank accounts of Bangladesh Nationalist Party Chairperson Khaleda Zia, 17 years after banks were ordered to block them. The National Board of Revenue (NBR) has instructed banks to unfreeze the accounts of BNP Chairperson Zia, the Daily Star newspaper reported. In August 2007, the NBR's Central Intelligence Cell directed banks to freeze the accounts of the BNP Chairperson, who has been elected Bangladesh's prime minister twice since 1990. The decision was based on a recommendation of a panel formed during the then Army-backed caretaker government, said a senior official of the



NBR. Since then, her accounts have remained blocked. The BNP has on several occasions demanded that they be unfrozen. The latest move comes after a mass uprising toppled Sheikh Hasina, a long-time rival of Khaleda, on August 5,

ending the Bangladesh Awami League's 15-year rule. An interim government led by Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus was sworn in on August 8. Zia, 79, was released from jail after Hasina, 76, fled to India on August 5. Zia served as the prime minister of Bangladesh from March 1991 to March 1996, and again from June 2001 to October 2006. The NBR said they received an application from Khaleda's lawyer on Sunday seeking to unfreeze the accounts. "As there are no tax-related issues pending investigation relating to her, we have advised banks to unlock all her accounts. We have asked them to take immediate action and provide a compliance report," the official was quoted as saying.

**Israel accepts 'bridging proposal' for Gaza ceasefire deal: Antony Blinken**

**Tel Aviv.** UPDATED US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said on Monday Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had accepted a "bridging proposal" presented by Washington to tackle disagreements blocking a ceasefire deal in Gaza, and urged Hamas to do the same. Blinken spoke to journalists after a day of meetings with Israeli officials, including a 2-1/2-hour meeting with Netanyahu that Blinken described as "very constructive." The top US diplomat had said earlier that this push was probably the best and possibly last opportunity for a deal. Talks in Qatar seeking a ceasefire and hostage return agreement last week paused without a breakthrough, but the negotiations are expected to resume this week based on the US proposal to bridge the gaps between Israel and Hamas. Blinken's visit

comes as US President Joe Biden faces mounting election-year pressure over his stance on the conflict, with his Democratic party starting its national convention on Monday amid pro-Palestinian protests and worries about Muslim and Arab American votes in swing states. However, with the Palestinian Islamist group announcing a resumption of suicide bombing inside Israel after many years, and claiming responsibility for a blast in Tel Aviv on Sunday night, and medics saying Israeli military strikes killed at least 30 Palestinians across the Gaza Strip on Monday, there are few signs of conciliation on the ground and fears of wider war in the region. "In a very constructive meeting with Prime Minister Netanyahu today, he confirmed to me that Israel accepts the bridging

proposal - that he supports it," Blinken told reporters in Tel Aviv. "It's now incumbent on Hamas to do the same, and then the parties, with the help of the mediators - the United States, Egypt and Qatar - have to come together and complete the process of reaching clear understandings about how they'll implement the commitments that they've made under this agreement."

## DIFFICULT NEGOTIATIONS

Despite US expressions of optimism and Netanyahu's office describing the meeting as positive, both Israel and Hamas have signalled that any deal will be difficult. Months of on-off talks have circled the same issues, with Israel saying the war can only end with the destruction of Hamas as a military and political force and Hamas saying it will only accept a permanent, and,

**Trump open to appointing Elon Musk to Cabinet if re-elected in November**

**Former US President Donald Trump said he would certainly appoint tech billionaire Elon Musk to any Cabinet position or advisory role if he was elected for a second White House term.**



advisory councils, where he aimed to influence environmental and immigration policies. However, the tech billionaire resigned in 2017 following Trump's decision to pull the US out of the landmark Paris climate accord. During his interview with Trump on X, Musk weighed on the idea of having a "government efficiency commission" to oversee spending and reduce waste and said he was keen to serve on such a board, according to Axios. In May, the Wall Street Journal reported that Musk and Trump discussed a potential role for the billionaire in the latter's administration if he is re-elected. However, Musk and SpaceX had pushed back on

the report at the time.

## TRUMP PLANS SCRAPPING OF EV TAX CREDITS

Meanwhile, during the Reuters interview, Trump said he was planning to end a \$7,500 (around Rs 6.28 lakh) tax credit for purchasing electric vehicles if he was re-elected, saying, "Tax credits and tax incentives are not generally a very good thing." The move, if enacted, may have significant outcomes for Tesla, the electric carmaker which Musk owns. If Trump is elected in the November 5 presidential election, he could take initiatives to reverse Treasury Department rules, which make it easier for automakers to take advantage of the \$7,500 credit or could ask the US Congress to scrap it completely, Reuters reported. When Trump was president from 2017 to 2021, he sought to revoke the EV tax credit that was later expanded by President Joe Biden in 2022. "I'm not making any final decisions on it. I'm a big fan of electric cars, but I'm a fan of gasoline-propelled cars, and also hybrids and whatever else happens to come along," the former president said of the tax credit. Trump underlined he would scrap the Biden administration's rules that give automakers a free hand to build.

**Bridging proposal': Blinken says Israel accepts Gaza plan, presses Hamas to agree**

**World** US Secretary of State Antony Blinken announced that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has accepted a "bridging proposal" presented by Washington to address disagreements hindering a ceasefire deal in Gaza. Blinken also urged Hamas to agree to the proposal. This announcement follows a day of discussions with Israeli officials, including a 2-1/2-hour meeting with Netanyahu. This effort is described as potentially the best and possibly the last chance for a deal. Talks in Qatar aimed at securing a ceasefire and a hostage return agreement paused last week without a breakthrough but are anticipated to resume based on the US proposal designed to bridge gaps between Israel and Hamas. Blinken's visit follows rising election-year pressures on US President Joe Biden over his stance on the conflict, amidst

Democratic party national convention and protests. However, tensions persist on the ground with Hamas announcing a resumption of suicide bombings in Israel, claiming responsibility for a blast in Tel Aviv on Sunday night. Meanwhile, Israeli military strikes reportedly killed at least 30 Palestinians in Gaza on Monday. These developments add to concerns of a broader conflict. "In a very constructive meeting with Prime Minister Netanyahu today, he confirmed to me that Israel accepts the bridging proposal - that he supports it," Blinken told reporters in Tel Aviv. "It's now incumbent on Hamas to do the same, and then the parties, with the help of the mediators - the United States, Egypt, and Qatar - have to come together and complete the process of reaching clear understandings about how they'll implement the

commitments that they've made under this agreement." Despite expressions of optimism and Netanyahu's office describing the meeting as positive, a deal remains challenging. Both parties have signaled significant difficulties in the negotiations. The core issues have remained unchanged over months of talks. Israel insists that the war should end only with the destruction of Hamas as a military and political force, while Hamas demands a permanent ceasefire. Key disagreements include Israel's continued military presence in Gaza, particularly along the Egyptian border, the free movement of Palestinians within Gaza, and the specifics of a prisoner swap. Hamas officials have accused the US of favoring Israel, complicating the negotiation process. "When Blinken says that the Israelis agreed, and then the Israelis say that there is an updated

proposal, this means that the Americans are subject to Israeli pressure and not the other way around. We believe that it is a maneuver that gives the Israelis more time," senior Hamas official Osama Hamdan told Reuters. The current conflict in Gaza began on October 7, 2023, with Hamas gunmen attacking Israeli communities, resulting in about 1,200 Israeli deaths and around 250 hostages abducted, per Israeli tallies. In response, Israel's military operations have majorly impacted the Gaza Strip, displacing nearly all of its 2.3 million residents and leading to severe humanitarian crises. Palestinian health authorities report a death toll of at least 40,000 in Gaza. Blinken, on his ninth trip to the region since the conflict began, met Israeli President Isaac Herzog and Prime Minister Netanyahu on Monday, followed by a meeting with defence minister Yoav Gallant.

## News box

## Junior doctors in Andhra continue strike, demand enhanced security

**VIJAYAWADA.** On the eve of Raksha Bandhan, the Andhra Pradesh Junior Doctors' Association (APJUDA) held a unique protest titled 'Abhaya ka Bhai' as part of their ongoing strike, now in its seventh day. Guntur Medical College APJUDA spokesperson Dr K Sai Sreenivas reported that they had met with Guntur's Superintendent of Police (SP), Satish, and the Director of Medical Education (DME). He mentioned that the SP assured them of improved security measures, including increased night patrols. Additionally, the Deputy Collector of Guntur, GGH Superintendent Dr Kiran Kumar, Principal TTK Reddy, and others attended the meeting and pledged to enhance security for the doctors. Dr Sreenivas also noted that the DME issued a plan of action addressing their demands, but emphasised that the strike would continue in response to the Federation of Resident Doctors Association's (FORDA) call for justice for the attacked doctor from RG Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata. In a similar demonstration, doctors from AIIMS Mangalagiri organised a protest, where they observed Red Apron Day and held a Raksha Bandhan event in which female participants tied rakhi to one another.

An intern at AIIMS, Dr A Gowtham, stated that the Resident Doctors, Interns, and Students of AIIMS Mangalagiri were continuing their indefinite protest, boycotting all non-emergency services, including OPDs, IPDs, Elective OTs, Lab services, and Academic Activities. The Director of Medical Education, DSVL Narasimham, acknowledged the challenges posed by the strike, stating that assistant professors, senior residents, in-service PGs, and non-clinical department doctors were being deployed to address the shortage of doctors for OPDs, elective surgeries, and emergencies. The Director of Medical Education urged the striking junior doctors to return to work, assuring them that certain demands, such as providing duty rooms, toilets, and additional security, would be resolved within 10 days.

## Suffered scratches, lesson learnt, says student after falling on Metro track

**BENGALURU.** One of the two students who fell on the Metro tracks, 18-year-old M Bhuvan, who suffered minor scratches on his right hand, said the incident has taught the trio many lessons, especially to be more careful in future. Speaking to TNIE after the mishap, Bhuvan, a first-year BCom student at Vijaya College, said, "We are all regular commuters on the Metro. Our travel has always been safe. This is the first time something like this has happened." Reliving what exactly happened, he said, "It was afternoon when we alighted at Kempegowda to switch over to the Purple Line and there was no security staff around to guide us. Yogesh and myself were walking in the front, while Ravikumar was a little behind. We both placed our guide canes in the wrong direction and suddenly fell down. The public came rushing and held back Ravi and prevented him from also falling with us."

He added that Metro officials immediately rushed to their aid. "I had small scratches on my right hand. We were taken to the station controller's room and I was given first aid. Yogesh escaped unharmed," he said.

Asked if he was worried about travelling by Metro again, he ruled that out. "I really don't know what happened today. We travel regularly. But it is a big lesson for all of us to be very careful in future. Fortunately, nothing major happened to any of us," he added. A Metro source said, "The trio were taken to the controller's room and given refreshments. They were there for half an hour, chatting with the staff and then departed to Atiguppe." Tactile tiles are present at all Metro stations to help the visually impaired. "Many visually impaired people use the Metro. It is the first time such an incident has occurred," he reiterated.

## Past meets fast in t-shirt printing in Hyderabad

**HYDERABAD.** T-shirts, once a symbol of casual wear, have become a canvas for artistic expression and branding. The evolution of t-shirt printing has paralleled advances in technology, transforming a simple garment into a medium for creativity and commerce. In the early days, t-shirt printing was limited to traditional methods such as tie-dye, batik, and block printing. These techniques, while rich in cultural heritage and eco-friendly, were labour-intensive and required a high level of skill. The emergence of screen printing marked a significant shift, providing a more practical solution for adding designs to t-shirts. Screen printing, one of the oldest forms of printing, began with a rudimentary setup. The process involved using a stencil or screen made from a wooden or metal frame with a polyester or nylon mesh. The fabric, which varied in quality and colour, was placed beneath the screen, and ink was pressed through the mesh to create the design. This method was not only effective but also allowed for the use of various types of inks, including water-based, discharge, foil, puff, and velvet prints.

## Hema Committee produces brilliant report despite minimal amenities

**The government's letter asking the committee to look into problems of junior artists came as a breakthrough as the committee could contact the individuals who had submitted complaints to the government.**



**THIRUVANANTHAPURAM:** Justice Hema Committee overcame many obstacles to prepare over 200 page report that brought to light the existing sexual harassment and male chauvinism in the Malayalam film industry. Even though many have raised skepticism against the report for its non-sensationalism and gentlemen approach Hema committee succeeded in bringing many unwanted elements to the forefront of the public discourse. Even in its all weakness the fact that it is the first of its kind of a report which investigated the dark side of the film industry. The committee's first meeting was held on 2017 December 19 in Thiruvananthapuram. After the Terms of Reference was fixed the committee

published it in major dailies. However, none responded. Meeting a difficult position the committee decided to contact individuals in cinema personally and invite them for a meeting. However, contact details – address, phone number, email ids – of both men and women who the committee intended to contact were not available. It had to spend considerable time to collect correct details and contact of individuals from the cinema field. When contacted most of them were not available in phone numbers or they did not answer the calls. When the committee decided to serve these individuals notice through post it discovered that the post of office attendant was not sanctioned. However, they took an office attendant

daily wages. When personal delivery was attempted it was found out that the required persons were not available in the address at that time. There was no guarantee that those individuals would appear before the committee on the date and time required. Even though most of the film fraternity was living in Kochi where the office of the committee was also situated most of them were away from homes. It was after the 2018 and 2019 floods the sittings were held continuously. There were days when sitting would start at 10 am and end at 9 in the night. The committee extended gratitude for actors and others working in cinema who spent considerable time.

Even though the committee was getting reliable information that the female junior artists were having a lot of serious problems the committee could not get any one of them. The government's letter asking the committee to look into problems of junior artists came as a breakthrough as the committee could contact the individuals who had submitted complaints to the government. The major blow to the functioning of the committee was that it did not have a stenographer. As the information received was important, to prevent the leakage and controversy the three committee members were forced to type the report by themselves.

## After demolition by caste Hindus, HR&CE to take over, rebuild temple in Vellore

**VELLORE.** A week after the Kaliyamman temple near Gemmankuppam village in Vellore district was razed by a group of caste Hindus using earthmovers to stop Dalits from taking part in a temple festival, revenue officials have announced a plan to rebuild the temple. The temple deity will be consecrated on August 22 and the construction work will start on that date. The rebuilt temple will be placed under the control of the HR&CE Department for better management, officials said. The decision was taken on Monday after a final peace meeting, held under ADSP Baskaran and Gudiyatham RDO S Subhalakshmi, between the representatives of caste Hindu

groups (Vanniyar, Yadav, Chettiar, and Naidu) and Scheduled Caste communities at the Gudiyatham RDO office. After the meeting, officials asked Loganathan, a caste Hindu who is absconding, to hand over the Kaliyamman idol which was allegedly taken away by him to the District Revenue Officer of KV Kuppam by Wednesday noon in the presence of HR&CE officials. The officials also directed the offenders to return the front iron door of the sanctum sanctorum to the DRO. "The temple will be reconstructed, and if both parties wish, they can donate for the temple reconstruction," officials said. As per the terms of the agreement, which officials said has been accepted by both the



groups, worshippers must return the temple key to the VAO after worship every day. A committee of seven government-appointed members will manage the temple. "The committee will make recommendations to

the DRO and the official will have the final say on temple ceremonies," officials said. The road to the temple must be accessible for everyone. For the next 10 days, police will provide security to maintain law and order, authorities said, adding that those involved in the demolition of the temple will face strict action.

Dalit villagers, however, have requested security, citing life threat. "We are facing threats from unknown individuals. We sought protection from district administration and also want 21 individuals mentioned in the FIR to be charged under the SC/ST Act," said Bharath Tamil (37), a Dalit resident of Gemmankuppam Village.

## Karnataka tops country with highest number of EV charging stations

**BENGALURU.** Karnataka is at the forefront of the electric vehicle revolution in India. According to a recent report by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE), under the Ministry of Power, the state has the highest number of public electric vehicle charging stations (PEVCS) in the country, most of them in Bengaluru.

As per the report, there are 5,765 PEVCS in the state, of which 4,462 are in Bengaluru Urban alone. Similar reports released by Vahaan and Yatra portals in 2023 and 2024, respectively, also showed Karnataka taking the lead in EV charging stations. Energy department officials said this achievement underscores the state's commitment to sustainability and clean energy. "According to recent data, Karnataka has set a remarkable benchmark with its electric vehicle infrastructure, and Bengaluru city is leading the charge. Bangalore Urban District alone boasts 4,462 EV charging stations, representing over 85% of the state's total. This highlights Bengaluru's

pivotal role in Karnataka's impressive achievement, underscoring the city's commitment to advancing sustainable transportation," a release from the department said. Karnataka was also the first state to introduce an EV policy in 2017. This initiative was further bolstered in 2021 with incentives for all stakeholders. The energy department is working to develop model EV cities across Karnataka, a strategic move aimed at significantly boosting EV adoption and establishing a sustainable transportation framework for the future, officials said.

Karnataka has set a new benchmark in the

nation with 5,765 PEVCS as per BEE statistics. The initiatives and policies implemented by the state reflect a concerted effort to build a robust EV infrastructure and promote sustainable transportation," Energy Minister KJ George said. The charging stations have been funded through a variety of sources. These include the Union government's Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Hybrid and Electric Vehicles (FAME) scheme, Bescom's own investments, green cess funds from the state transport department, and public-private partnerships, said Bescom Managing Director Mahantesh Bilagi. To boost Karnataka's EV ecosystem, the state government, in the February 2024 budget, proposed the establishment of nearly 2,500 new EV charging stations across the state under the public-private partnership model. The government plans to invest Rs 35 crore in setting up 100 charging centres in collaboration with power supply companies, the release said.



## Coconut oil in ration shops: Tamil Nadu govt starts survey

**COIMBATORE.** After repeated demands from farmers to distribute coconut oil through ration shops to ensure fair price for coconut and copra, the state civil supplies department has started a survey to find out if ration cardholders would be ready to buy half litre of coconut oil in the place of one litre of palmolein oil.

According to sources, ration shop supervisors of several districts have been provided forms to record the feedback of cardholders. "The study will be conducted till the end of August. After collecting details, the district administrations will compile a report and send it to the state government," said Coimbatore Collector Kranti Kumar Pati. Official sources from the food department said the government has also sought inputs from collectors of districts bordering Kerala, including Kanniyakumari and Tenkasi, regarding the proposal. An official said, "Some residents in these border districts may prefer using coconut oil for cooking. The collectors have been instructed to determine how many cardholders are interested in making the switch."

A senior official from the civil supplies department said, "Since this is a policy

decision, the government will take the final call after reviewing the reports from the study." Coconut growers, especially those from Coimbatore and Tirupur, have been demanding that the state government sell coconut oil through



ration shops to ensure a fair price for their produce. Supply coconut oil through PDS shops irrespective of survey result. During CM M K Stalin's recent LS poll campaign in Pollachi, he promised to take steps to ensure a better price for coconuts. Hailing the state government's move, V K S K Senthilkumar, member of the

Coimbatore District Agricultural Production Committee, said, "Currently, the farm-gate price of a coconut is Rs 6 to Rs 8. If the government commences sale of coconut oil through ration shops instead of palmolein oil, it will be a big boost for farmers as they can get better price for their produce." He urged the state government to implement the change without hesitation. He also added that during copra procurement, priority should be given to cooperative societies, individual farmers, and then private firms. T A Krishnasami, president of the United South India Coconut Growers Association, Pollachi, said, "At present, copra is procured at Rs 111.60 per kilogram by cooperative societies. Private firms offer up to Rs 90 per kg. Due to the low price, farmers are financially burdened. Did state government conduct such a study before implementing the palmolein oil distribution through ration shops? We urge the state government to commence the distribution of coconut oil through ration shops irrespective of the survey results."

2021 but failed. Forest officials said Ramu's carcass was found near the boundary wall of Chandaka near Bharatpur forests. Since a cut mark was found on the trunk of the carcass, forest officials suspect the tusker died of electrocution as such marks are often caused in cases of electrocution. Besides, the heart of the elephant was found to have turned dark during postmortem. "A slum is located right next to the boundary, while there are also low tension (LT) lines nearby. The electrocution might have been a fallout of bushmeat hunting," said a forest official from Chandaka Wildlife Division. A clear picture regarding exact cause of the death will emerge after the autopsy report is received from the veterinary team, he added. Chandaka DFO Sarat Chandra Behera said a probe has been launched at divisional level following the incident. The joint task force and special task force of the Forest department will also investigate the incident separately, sources said.

The other elephant, an adult female, was electrocuted to death in a forest in Charadapasi village under Naktideul range of Raikhol division in Sambalpur district on Sunday.

Odisha has earned the dubious distinction of being on top in electrocution death of jumbos. The state has lost 61 elephants to electrocution, making it the highest for any of the elephant-range states in the last five years between 2019-20 and 2023-24.

## Gujarat: SUVs lead 43% increase in high-end car sales in FY24

**AHMEDABAD.** Vehicle sales in Gujarat are revving up, with SUVs and luxury cars driving the surge, especially in rural areas. A 43% spike was recorded in high-end car sales between 2022-23 and 2023-24, with SUVs leading the charge.

Transport department data reveals the most significant jump of 47% in vehicles priced between Rs 20 to Rs 50 lakh, while cars above Rs 50 lakh saw a 39% increase. Interestingly, the demand for cars in the Rs 20 lakh range grew by 10%. Of every 100 cars sold in the Rs 20-50 lakh category, only 40% were sold in the cities of Ahmedabad, Surat, Vadodara and Rajkot.

The remaining 60% were purchased in rural areas, a shift attributed to rising incomes and better liquidity among farmers. Dealers report a growing preference for SUVs in rural areas, driven by farmers' increased earnings. The numbers tell the story: in 2022-23, 7,024 vehicles priced above Rs 20 lakh were sold, jumping to 10,347 in 2023-24 - a rise of 3,323 units. Between April 1 to July 31 this year, the number touched 1,536. RTO officials said urban residents are also registering luxury vehicles in rural areas to save on vehicle tax. For instance, registering an SUV worth Rs 40 lakh in a rural area can save up to Rs 1.75 lakh in taxes compared to urban centres like Ahmedabad. Vehicle taxes in Gujarat vary significantly based on location, ranging from 1% to 5% of the vehicle's base price. Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation would levy Rs 4.35 lakh in taxes for a car with a base price of Rs 87 lakh. In contrast, the tax would be Rs 2.61 lakh in Rajkot, Rs 2.17 lakh in Vadodara, and Rs 3.48 lakh in Surat for the exact vehicle. Fada Gujarat chairman Hitendra Nanavati attributes this trend to the liquidity in the state, with buyers willing to upgrade to SUVs over Rs 20 lakh. "Limited options in the Rs 30-50 lakh range push buyers toward higher-end models which are over Rs 50 lakh," he said.

## Chandaka tusker electrocuted near Bhubaneswar

**BHUBANESWAR:** In a shocking incident, Ramu, a popular elephant of Chandaka Wildlife Sanctuary died of suspected electrocution near Bharatpur forests on the city's outskirts exposing the vulnerability of the scheduled species even in the state capital. It is the second such death in the state in the last 48 hours. The 41-year-old jumbo belonging to Bharatpur reserve forest in Chandaka Wildlife Division, often found roaming in forests of Chandaka and Khurda, was quite familiar in the locality as he was the first tusker the Forest department had attempted to radio-collar in



## Frame strict law to safeguard healthcare workers

THE rape and murder of a resident doctor at the state-run RG Kar Medical College and Hospital earlier this month has triggered widespread outrage and shaken the conscience of people. The post-mortem report indicates a Nirbhaya-like brutal assault. Shocking as it is, the incident occurred on the premises of the medical facility while she was on duty. To make it worse, the hospital authorities tried to cover it up.

This was not an isolated case. Last year, a 22-year-old doctor was stabbed to death in Kerala in the presence of cops. These two cases are extreme instances of violence against medical professionals, something that has been going on for years. Just a couple of months ago, a doctor at a hospital in Raichur were thrashed by relatives after a patient's death. And earlier, in January, a doctor was assaulted at a taluk hospital in Karnataka. Violence against doctors falls into two categories. First, there is violence by the relatives or attendants of a patient over perceived negligence or billing disputes. And then there is violence by criminal elements. The Kolkata incident is a case of crime against a woman. Doctors at bigger private hospitals are relatively safe, thanks to restrictions on the entry and number of attendants, the presence of CCTV cameras and adequate infrastructure.

However, at government hospitals, the entry of outsiders goes mostly unchecked. Besides, there is a shortage of security personnel, corridors are poorly lit, duty rooms are not adequate, and there is often little electronic surveillance. Currently, most Class III and IV employees are hired on contract, and their antecedents are not verified. The victim in the Kolkata case had gone to a seminar room to take rest, perhaps because of the unavailability of a proper duty room. The culprit is said to be a 'civic volunteer', who would ostensibly help patients get admitted to government hospitals, in all likelihood, for a commission. But it is not only doctors who are at the receiving end; other healthcare workers (HCWs) also face violence. The most gruesome incident was the sexual assault on a nurse by a hospital lift operator at Mumbai's KEM Hospital in 1973. The victim suffered brain damage and remained in a vegetative state for over 40 years. Nurses and other female employees are the most vulnerable segment at hospitals. The WHO defines workplace violence in the healthcare sector as incidents in which a staff member is abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances related to their work. Lancet surveillance yielded 225 violent incidents against HCWs in 2020 and 110 in 2021. Though India contributes less than 1 per cent of global HCWs, it accounted for 3.4 per cent of all such incidents. The incidence of violence against HCWs in India was 57 times that in the UK and 850 times that in China, countries that have taken legal action against violence. According to an estimate, there is at least one case of violence against an HCW in the national capital every day, with a majority going unreported.

The Indian Medical Association has been demanding a separate law to ensure the safety and security of doctors and other HCWs. Following reports of violence against HCWs during the Covid-19 pandemic, the Epidemic Diseases (Amendment) Ordinance, 2020, was promulgated to supplement the Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897. The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare had released the Healthcare Service Personnel and Clinical Establishments (Prohibition of Violence and Damage to Property) Bill in September 2019 to address violence against healthcare professionals and damage to property. But it was rejected by the Ministry of Home Affairs on the grounds that the Bill would set an improper precedent for others seeking such exclusive protections for their respective professions. Subsequently, in September 2020, the Epidemic Diseases (Amendment) Act, 2020, was passed, but its provisions fall short of the doctors' demands.

Since law and order is a state subject, there are state laws in 25 states (including West Bengal) and union territories called the Medicare Service Persons and Medicare Service Institutions Act. Under the Act, violence against HCWs is a non-bailable offence in most states, but there is no uniformity in its provisions in different states. Moreover, there is apathy and a lack of awareness about it among law enforcement agencies.

## Putting govts into 'pro-India' or 'pro-China' boxes serves to show up Delhi's insecurities

INDIA and the Maldives appear to be working quietly to reset their ties since their low point between January and March this year. External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar's visit to Male earlier this month came two months after President Mohamed Muizzu visited Delhi for the swearing-in ceremony of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The realisation on both sides that each needs the other is apparent. India had to pull out its military personnel from the Maldives, but the archipelago's tourism-and-imports-dependent economy is sinking under a twin fiscal and current account deficit crisis and a debt of mountainous proportions. India tends to dismiss popular movements in its neighbouring countries as orchestrated by foreign hands or political parties, leading to nasty surprises. Last month, Muizzu announced cutbacks in spending. Public expenditure has been slashed drastically, leaving in the lurch infrastructure projects. The free healthcare system is to be streamlined and loss-making state-owned enterprises face 'reforms'. If the Maldives needs Delhi for an economic bailout, the latter remains acutely aware of the strategic importance of the Maldives. At Male's request, Delhi rolled over a \$50-million Maldives Treasury Bill, resubscribing to it for one more year upon its maturity. The thank-you note came a month later. On a visit to China, Maldivian Minister of Economic Development and Trade Mohamed Saeed noted in an interview to a TV channel the importance of India to his country's economy. It was a 180-degree turn from Muizzu's "India is a threat to our sovereignty" declaration in Beijing in January. But Delhi's more significant ask from the Maldives is a free trade agreement. Saeed told a press conference in Male that India "is asking that there should be a free trade agreement" and that deliberations had been initiated in this regard. He said the Maldives was open to having FTAs with 'all countries' for 'ease of trade'. It already has an FTA with China dating back to 2018, signed during the Abdulla Yameen government. He was voted out before it could be implemented. The successor Ibu Solih government shelved it. It is significant that Muizzu's announcement on implementing the FTA with China in September came days ahead of Jaishankar's visit. All this was likely discussed during Jaishankar's visit.

What this means is that the Maldives-India reset is still a work in progress and it will not be all smooth. But the

pragmatism that now informs the relationship between India and a small country like the Maldives is instructive for India's relations across the region. For one, it shows that putting governments abroad into narrow 'friend of Delhi' or 'anti-India' boxes only reveal India's own insecurities behind the bluster of a 'strong' foreign policy. It reinforces an unflattering image of a Delhi whose diplomacy succeeds only in ideal conditions, that is when 'loyalty' from the other government is available on tap. How much the 'pro-India' Ibu Solih's decision to outlaw criticism of India in 2022 was influenced by Delhi is not known. What is clear is that the undemocratic decree played right into the hands of the Maldivian opposition and those behind the 'India Out' protests. Just like the much-advertised friendship between India and Sheikh Hasina in Bangladesh exposed bilateral ties to high risk, especially when Delhi could not deliver on her

Doing this as a matter of course is important rather than six months before an important election, when it sends a message of another kind. In Bangladesh, India has shunned the BNP since 2012. Thirdly, in a region partitioned along religious lines, communally charged statements at home or violent incidents of communal hate travel swiftly across borders. In June 2022, despite the Solih government's India First policy, it was forced by the Opposition to issue a statement of 'deep concern' over remarks by a BJP spokesperson against Prophet Muhammad. Sheikh Hasina's government, on the other hand, declared the matter 'an internal issue', reinforcing the perception that she was taking orders from Delhi. India was right in asking Bangladesh to protect its minorities but Delhi's own failure to lead by example is conspicuous. Muhammed Yunus, head of Bangladesh's interim government, has visited a Hindu temple and reassured the country's Hindus that they will be protected. In India, the PM has engaged in dangerous dog-whistling. Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, for India, which positions itself as a first responder to multiple crises in the neighbourhood - from economic emergencies to climate change, piracy, accidents at sea, water shortages, tsunamis, earthquakes, etc. — the people should be at the heart of the engagement. Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, the Maldives, civil society and media are strong actors and influence public opinion in no small measure. People's perceptions and views about India and its role contributes directly or indirectly to anti-incumbency in most of these countries.

A recent statement by mediapersons and civil society activists of Nepal, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka asks India to "be supportive of the democratic aspirations of South Asia's peoples and let them build their individual paths to the future". But Delhi's securitised foreign policy in the region has little place for engagement with non-government actors, mirroring the Modi government's attitude towards them at home. When was the last time an Indian foreign minister gave an interview to the media in these countries? Instead, there is a tendency to talk down people's agency in these countries and to dismiss popular movements as orchestrated by foreign hands or political parties, leading to nasty surprises.

In Afghanistan, the one country in the region where the people love India unconditionally, Delhi has stepped away deliberately from a robust people-to-people engagement for the sake of its Pakistan/security-driven engagement with the Taliban. But even there, Delhi would be making a mistake by believing that the people will never win back their agency.



one big demand — an agreement on the sharing of the Teesta waters — and her own turn to authoritarianism began to be blamed on India. Secondly, change of government is inevitable in democracies, making a diplomatic outreach to opposition parties important. India has been reaching out to the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) in Sri Lanka, a party with a history of virulent opposition to India and whose leader Anura Kumara Dissanayake is a strong contender in the upcoming presidential election. He was invited to India recently, given a tour of Anand, the heart of India's hard-wrought milk self-sufficiency, and Kerala, where the JVP, a party that combines Sinhala nationalism with leftism, could see India's federalism in action.

## Doctors' strike

### A right cause, but at what cost to patients?



remain available. The Madhya Pradesh High Court has emphasised the importance of maintaining healthcare services during strikes, highlighting the legal and moral

responsibility of medical professionals to their patients.

The government needs to address the root causes of the doctors' dissatisfaction by ensuring their safety through adequate funding and infrastructure improvements, such as providing more CCTV cameras and security personnel in medical institutions. In a country where healthcare access is already a challenge, the strike only exacerbates the suffering of those who can least afford it. The lack of political will to improve healthcare services is evident. The government must act swiftly to resolve this crisis so that justice is delivered speedily. Balancing the doctors' legitimate concerns with the fundamental right to healthcare is not just a necessity, but it is also a moral imperative.

## Zero-tolerance approach a must to curb crimes against women

### The plight of victims in high-profile rape cases and the relief accorded by the state to the accused are stark in cases such as that of Bilkis Bano.

THE horrific gangrape and murder of a junior doctor at a medical college and hospital in Kolkata has triggered national outrage. This was reflected in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Independence Day address.

Alluding to the incident, Modi said: "I would like to express my pain once again, from the Red Fort today. As a society, we will have to think seriously about the atrocities against women that are happening — there is outrage against this in the country. I can feel this outrage. The country, society and state governments will have to take this seriously." He added that such cases of crime against women should be investigated speedily "and those responsible should be punished without delay". The victim in the Kolkata case is being referred to as Abhaya by her shell-shocked colleagues, recalling the horrific 2012 Delhi gangrape-murder that was termed the 'Nirbhaya' case; it took eight years before the perpetrators were finally brought to justice in March 2020. Whether the culprits in the Abhaya case will be awarded exemplary punishment is a moot point, as the case has already generated a predictable political slugfest. The Trinamool Congress (TMC) government led by CM Mamata Banerjee has accused the Opposition parties (BJP, Congress and CPI) of muddying the waters. Some very anomalous developments characterise the Abhaya case.

While law and order is a state subject, in what amounts to a no-confidence signal against the local police, Mamata has backed the transfer of the case probe to the CBI and demanded that the perpetrators be apprehended and tried expeditiously. Preliminary reports about how the case was handled by the local police in the early stages of the investigation have raised many troubling questions, including allegations of a botched cover-up attempt to shield the perpetrators. A rebuke by the Calcutta High Court has shamed the police. To compound the alleged perfidy

by the state government, the principal of the medical college concerned was allowed to 'resign' but was immediately appointed at another local hospital, thereby exonerating him of the lapses resulting in the Abhaya tragedy. Even wellwishes of the TMC are dismayed.

The sexual violence unleashed on the doctor is gut-wrenching. Hopefully, the CBI will be able to move swiftly, even as the Abhaya case is the tip of a murky iceberg. In the same fortnight, a nurse returning home after night duty at an Uttarakhand hospital was sexually assaulted and murdered (July 30); the accused was arrested a week later from Bareilly. India's rape statistics indicate that 90 such dastardly incidents are reported daily. This may be relatively low by global standards — as per an estimate, India reports 1.8 rape cases per 100,000 population, while the figures for Botswana and South Africa are 92.9 and 72.1, respectively. However, this is a callous justification for the deplorable trends related to the security and safety of women and the girl child over the past two decades. A large number of rape and molestation cases do not get reported by the families of the victims. Alas, in many instances, close family members are the culprits. Despite Nirbhaya-2012 and the outrage it generated at that time, the response of both the state and society has not changed for the better in any visible manner. Immediate uproar after every ghastly incident is followed by political platitudes. The 'Beti Bachao' (save the girl child)



pledge, made with fanfare by Modi 1.0 in January 2015, remains a mere slogan. The law is enforced in a selective manner. Once assured of state patronage, the ubiquitous male predator remains on the prowl and vulnerable women are exploited, whether at the workplace (as in the Abhaya case) or on the streets (Nirbhaya case). PM Modi made an intriguing observation in his August 15 address when he highlighted the importance of creating a 'fear of consequences of rape'. He said: "When an incident of rape happens, the media discusses the case at length, but when these perpetrators are brought to book, there is very little discussion on the same. We need to speak about the action taken on such criminals so that it can act as a

deterrent." The plight of victims in high-profile rape cases and the relief accorded by the state to the accused are stark in cases such as that of Bilkis Bano (2002 Gujarat riots); clearly, political considerations trump the sanctity of the law. Electoral compulsions have made a mockery of justice; the perpetrators, instead of being brought to book, are feted and treated with kid gloves. The sordid Gurmeet Ram Rahim saga and the latitude given by the Modi government to ex-MP and former wrestling federation chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh are illustrative. Alas, the Indian ecosystem stinks when it comes to political rectitude and institutional integrity. This is borne out by a disturbing trend. The nexus between crime and politics in India was outlined in the 1993 Vohra committee report, but to little avail. An ADR (Association for Democratic Reforms) survey after the 2024 Lok Sabha elections revealed that 251 (46 per cent) of the 543 newly elected MPs had criminal cases registered against them and 27 had been convicted. In 2023, it was estimated that 134 sitting MPs and MLAs were facing cases related to crimes against women; this list included 21 MPs and 113 MLAs. Chanakya's tenet that the ruler (the elected leader in the current times) has to be guided by the yogakshema (welfare) of the citizens, particularly vulnerable ones such as women, must come back into focus for the Indian political class. PM Modi needs to ponder deeply over the Kautilyan maxim, "Praja sukhe sukham rajyah, Prajanam cha hitah hitam" (in the welfare and happiness of the people lies the king's welfare and happiness) and ensure that his government can walk the talk when it comes to streerakshana (women's safety), lest sophistry become his legacy.

We agree that parenting a child is a huge task - surviving nine months of pregnancy, then the pain of labor, and later chasing your child through the crawling, feeding, toilet training stages - it's a lengthy experience indeed. But all this pain and agony disappears and a coat of excitement grips you when you first hear your baby calling you 'Mamma-Dada' or when your baby takes his very first step.



Men feel worse when part 10 things all brand

Though parenting a newborn requires a large amount of effort and energy, the positive aspect of the reward you receive by watching your baby grow and develop is priceless. Today, we help each and every new parent by presenting a few tips ranging from child potty training to baby care, so that parenting becomes an (ever so slightly) easier task for you. Dr. Shilpa - Nutritionist, Diet Consultant and Founder of Nutrilife Health Management, shares some amazing facts and tips to make parenting more interesting and easy...

#### Potty can even take hours

Don't get into high hopes when you take your child to eliminate the waste. Some kids may surprise you by doing this mechanism in minutes. Don't expect your child to do the same; your child can even take hours to eliminate his waste. Let him take his own time, and keep cool - says Dr. Shilpa.

#### Elastic waists are your baby's friends

Make your child's dressing and undressing process simple and effortless. Many kids are uncomfortable with buttons and zippers, because it can be a time consuming affair and can make your baby frustrated when he wants to visit the bathroom. Hence, invest in elastic waist pants or shorts, until your child is comfortable with the buttons and



#### swaps.

#### Don't go overboard with technology

You may be geeky when it comes to new technologies, but it can scare your child quite a bit. When you take your child to the bathroom, and there is an automated flusher installed, the loud noise may terrify your child. The fear can grip so deeply that he may never use the bathroom alone - adds Dr. Shilpa.

#### More time with your child and less work

If you want to get the required attention from your child then you too must dedicate time for your child. Focus on the things that make your baby happy. When you are with your baby, avoid multi-tasking as this can spoil your relationship with your baby.

#### You might have to change a whole lot of bed sheets...

Some kids take much longer to master the technique of staying dry overnight. In case your child wakes up wet, then don't yell at him, it is completely normal. The reason for him to wake up wet could be

that he is in deep sleep. Just keep an extra set of bed sheet to let him sleep peacefully.

#### You will make new friends

You might have an endless list of good pals, but those friends may just end up being a peripheral group now. You don't choose your friends now, your child chooses friends for you. Nowadays, you will end up hanging out with moms and dads of those children that your child met at the playground or playmates from school.

#### Your living room will be messy

Slowly when your baby grows up, you will jump with joy to see your baby rolling, crawling and then finally walking. But that peace of moment

can turn into a nightmare when your baby becomes mobile.

You will see your living room turn into a huge mess, when your child will suddenly turn into a mischievous monster. Suddenly you will see your closet empty and all the clothes on the floor, and whatever is within his reach will find its way to the floor and odd corners of the room.

Keep calm, and don't forget to keep hazardous objects beyond your baby's reach.

#### Your child may throw more tantrums than a teenage girl...

Every parent shares stories of their kid's monster tantrums with friends. Dr. Shilpa says, 'Indeed it is a toddler's

job to throw tantrums, but as a parent it is your job to set boundaries for your child with firm loving and caring disciplines."

#### Your maternity leave will be tougher than the toughest work days

You may plan your maternity leave by doing all last minute tasks at work and then feel like your vacation has just started on the last day before maternity leave begins. But you're in for a surprise. Your maternity leave is an incredible time to bond with your baby but it can be a little gruesome as well.

You might just end up without showering up till 4 pm, completely entrenched in your baby's daily

cycles of breastfeeding, changing nappies, diapers etc. But before you resume work you won't feel like going anywhere without your baby, because of the incompleteness without him.

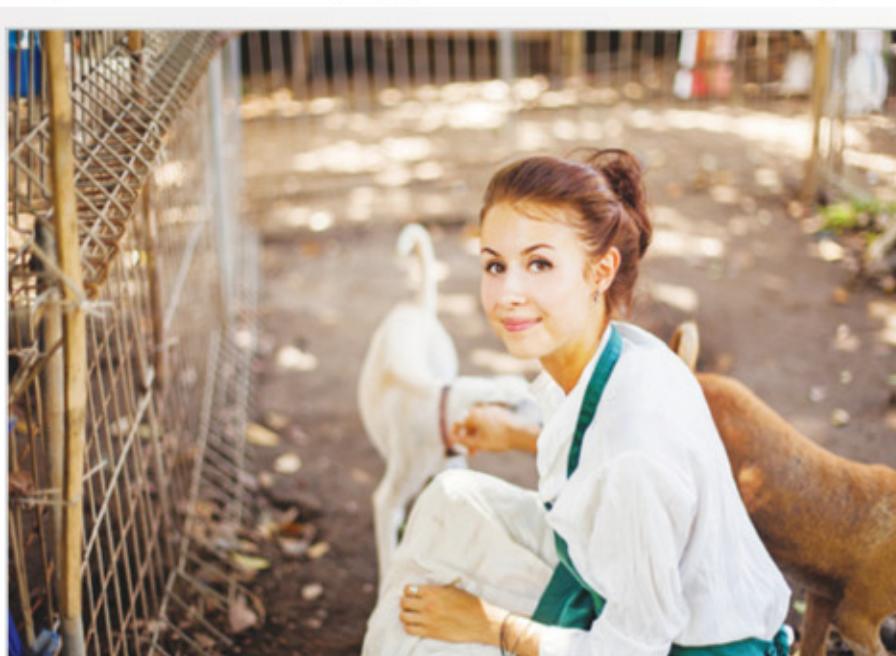
#### When you are with your baby, everything turns out to be sweet

There can be incredible sweet moments with your baby, even if you've just yelled at him. These moments are very special for each and every parent, who wishes to keep those memories alive forever. After a serious fight with your baby, your baby can make your day just by coming close to you, kissing your nose and gently whispering to you, 'I Love You'.

## Pets bust stress and make You humane

Not just adults, children can benefit immensely from a pet too. Dr Jyotika Chibber, who conducts healing sessions for patients, often with the help of a pet says, "Pets give children a companion that needs and seeks attention at times, but gives back loads of love. Children also feel a sense of security with a dog or pet at home. When parents are out at work, children tend to play and spend time with pets. This keeps them engaged and active. A child also learns to fall into a routine because the pet can teach them that effortlessly."

Studies have shown that pet therapy can help children who suffer from attention deficit disorder (ADD) enabling them to focus on a pet, which in turn helps them learn to concentrate. Radhika says that therapy pets (animals trained to extend therapeutic touch) can turn out to be an antidote to depression and help patients at healthcare centres. Pets also provide social



interaction. In a healthcare facility, people come out of their rooms to socialise with the animals and end up knowing each other better.

Renowned veterinarian, Dr Schoen, and an author of a book on animal healing was quoted in a report which said that love for pets can literally save lives and their love for humans can be a transforming experience. According to DR Schoen, 'in order to bond with animals, we need to step outside ourselves and learn to communicate on their terms.'

Agreeing with Dr Schoen's words, Suryaveer Bhullar, a pet lover says,

"Everyone has the need to 'touch'. Many humans are uncomfortable hugging or touching people who are close to them. With a pet, this habit is easy to break making it easier to express emotions. The nonverbal connection is invaluable in the healing process."

Pancham Hariharan, a college student and a keen pet lover finds her pet dog extremely instinctive. She says, "Every time a stranger is moving towards me in a crowded area, my dog barks out a sort of a warning. This is enough to make the person move away. I feel safe with my pet around." Dr Jyotika agrees. "Pets can definitely foresee troubles being



into acute depression. By walking the dog, feeding and bathing her pet, she felt a sense of reassurance. "Animals allow humans to focus, even for a short period of time, on something other than themselves. This distraction tends to help the pet owners in relaxation," cued Radhika

# Sonia Gandhi Slams Centre's Move, Says Khadi Sole Fabric For Indian Flag



The Flag Code of India has historically required the national flag to be made of "hand spun and hand-woven wool/cotton/silk khadi bunting", she pointed out.

**New Delhi:** Slamming the central government for the "rampant adoption" of machine-manufactured polyester flags, Congress leader Sonia Gandhi today called for the restoration of khadi as the only fabric with the distinction of bearing the Indian flag and asserted that the fabric must find its rightful place as an embodiment of national pride. Penning an article in *The Hindu*, Mrs Gandhi said Prime Minister Narendra Modi's renewed call for a 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign in the week leading up to the Independence Day offers an opportunity to collectively introspect on the national flag and its significance to the country. His (PM Modi's) moral duplicity in paying deference to the national flag while pledging allegiance to an organisation that has remained, indifferent to it, is one matter. The rampant adoption of machine-manufactured polyester flags,

with raw materials often imported from China and elsewhere, is another," she said.

The Flag Code of India has historically required the national flag to be made of "hand spun and hand-woven wool/cotton/silk khadi bunting", she pointed out. Khadi, that coarse but versatile and sturdy fabric which the Mahatma himself spun and wove in his leadership of the national movement, is imbued with a special meaning in our historical and cultural memory, she said.

Khadi is at once a symbol of our storied past, and an icon of Indian modernity and economic vitality, the Congress Parliamentary Party chief asserted. It was in deference to this eternal symbolism that the tricolour once bore the Mahatma's charkha as its centrepiece, and that the modern-day Indian flag used to insist on khadi as its sole



fabric, Mrs Gandhi said.

In 2022, on the auspicious occasion of the 75th anniversary of our Independence, the Government amended the code (vide its order dated 30.12.2021) to include 'machine made...polyester ... bunting' and simultaneously exempted polyester flags from the Goods and Services Tax (GST). Thereby, it put them on the same tax

footing as khadi flags," she said. At a time when it would have been appropriate to bind ourselves afresh to the service of our country's national symbols, the Government chose to set them aside and pursue mass-market, machine-made polyester fabric, Mrs Gandhi said.

She pointed out that the Karnataka Khadi Gramodyoga Samyukta Sangha (KKGSS) in Karnataka's Hubballi district, the country's sole national flag manufacturing unit accredited by the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), had to resort to an indefinite strike to call attention to the state-sponsored murder of India's khadi industry.

This decision came at a time when India, far from its glory days as a global hub for polyester manufacturing, became a net importer of polyester yarn in 2023 and 2024, she said. "We thus have the real

misfortune of importing polyester yarn, primarily from China, and then weaving this imported yarn to produce cloth for our national flag. This shameful inversion of our national pride occurred at the time of grave encroachments by the Chinese armed forces on our borders, and at the peak of the Prime Minister's 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' spectacle," Mrs Gandhi said, in a scathing attack at the Centre. "The hollowness and inadequacy of the government's vision has had direct and calamitous consequences for the Mahatma's foremost legatees - our khadi spinners and weavers," she said. The case of our national flag is not an exception, rather, it is a vividly poignant illustration of this government's general disinterest in cultivating India's storied handloom and handicraft traditions - khadi or otherwise, she said.

## Arunachal Makes Inner Line Permit Mandatory For Non-Residents To Enter State

**Itanagar:** Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu on Monday took steps to strengthen the existing Inner Line Permit (ILP) system that makes it mandatory for a non-Arunachalee person to obtain a permit to enter the state. In a joint meeting with top government officials and leaders of the All Arunachal Pradesh Students' Union (AAPSU) in Itanagar, Mr Khandu emphasised the need to strengthen the ILP system to prevent illegal entry and prolonged stay of



non-local migrants in the state. "Our main objective is to protect our indigenous tribes from outside influx and we are committed to it," he said. While informing that the state government is internally preparing to strengthen the ILP system, Mr Khandu said that it was necessary to take inputs from the state's premier students' organization, AAPSU, headed by its President Dozi Tana Tara, through a PowerPoint presentation explained in detail a survey conducted by the Union and ways and means to strengthen the present system.

## Bharat Bandh Today: Reason For August 21 Strike, Who Called It And What Services Will Stay Open - Find Out

**New Delhi:** The Bharat Bandh scheduled for August 21, 2024, has been organised as a nationwide protest by the Reservation Bachao Sangharsh Samiti against a recent Supreme Court ruling concerning reservations for Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST). The ruling, which allows states to create sub-categories within these groups, has sparked widespread controversy. The apex court, while creating the sub-categories, said, "Those who really need it should get priority in reservation." The primary objective of the Bharat Bandh is to challenge this ruling and demand its reversal, emphasizing the need to protect the integrity of the reservation system as it stands.

The Supreme Court's decision to allow sub-categorization within SC/ST reservations has led to significant unrest. The court ruled that states could prioritise reservations for sub-groups within SC/STs that are more disadvantaged, stating, "Those who really need it should get priority in reservation." This decision has been met with strong opposition, with many arguing that it could dilute the benefits intended for SC/ST communities as a whole.

### Nationwide Support and Participation

The Bharat Bandh has garnered support from various social and political organisations across the country. SC/ST groups in Rajasthan have been particularly vocal, and their participation is expected to be significant. The protest has also found backing from political leaders who have expressed concern over the potential long-term implications of the Supreme Court's ruling.

In anticipation of potential unrest, authorities have implemented extensive security measures across the country. Senior police officials have conducted meetings via video conference to coordinate efforts and ensure public safety. According to news reports, divisional commissioners, district magistrates, and senior police officers have been instructed to maintain law and order throughout the bandh.

## "Nation Can't Await Another Rape For Real Changes On Ground": Supreme Court

The CJI DY Chandrachud-led bench also expressed strong dissatisfaction with the West Bengal government and the authorities at the hospital over the delay in filing the FIR.

**New Delhi:** The Supreme Court, hearing the Kolkata rape-murder incident today, said the nation cannot wait for another rape for changes on the ground. The DY Chandrachud-led bench also expressed strong dissatisfaction with the West Bengal government and the authorities at the hospital over the delay in filing the FIR and other procedural lapses in handling the case. "Medical professions have become vulnerable to violence. Due to ingrained patriarchal biases, women doctors are targeted more. As more and more women join the workforce, the nation cannot wait for another rape for things to change on the ground," CJI Chandrachud noted. During the hearing, Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud raised several pressing questions regarding the actions of the hospital's administration and the local police. "Why was FIR registered three

hours after the body was handed over for cremation," the Supreme Court bench asked.

### 'What Was Principal Doing?'

The Supreme Court, on its own, took up the investigation into the brutal rape and murder of a 31-year-old post-graduate trainee doctor at Kolkata's RG Kar Medical College and Hospital on August 9. The incident has triggered widespread protests across the country and raised questions over women's safety, particularly in medical colleges. The three-judge bench is led by CJI Chandrachud and comprises Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra. "What was the principal doing? FIR was not filed; the body was handed late to the parents. What is the police doing? A serious offence has taken place, the crime scene is in a hospital... What are they doing? Allowing vandals to enter the hospital?" CJI Chandrachud asked.

## "Papa, Your Teachings Are...": Rahul Gandhi On Rajiv Gandhi's Anniversary

**New Delhi:** Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday paid tribute to his father, former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi on his birth anniversary and emphasised that he'll fulfil Rajiv Gandhi's dreams for India taking his memories with him. "A compassionate personality, an epitome of camaraderie and goodwill... Papa, your teachings are my inspiration, and your dreams for India are my own - I will fulfil them, taking your memories with me," the Congress leader posted on X. Rahul Gandhi also visited Veer Bhumi and paid floral tribute to Rajiv Gandhi on his birth anniversary. Party RS MP Jairam Ramesh also celebrated Rajiv Gandhi's contribution to India's political and

technological landscape. "Today is Rajiv Gandhi@80. His was a short but very consequential political life. The March 1985 Budget in which he played a key role heralded a new approach to economic policy. The manifesto for the 1991 Lok Sabha elections, on which he spent long hours a few weeks before his tragic assassination, provided the foundations for the Rao-Manmohan Singh reforms of June-July 1991. Peace accords in troubled regions of the country like Assam, Punjab, Mizoram, and Tripura were made possible by his statesmanship that put national interest over the immediate interests of his party.... We recall not just a Prime Minister today but also a very fine and

caring human being who bore no malice showed no vindictiveness, sought no revenge, indulged in no bombast and self-glory, and exhibited no qualities of self-delusion," he added.

He had a vision for societal applications of science and technology that were reflected in the impactful technology missions in drinking water supply, immunization, literacy, oilseeds production and telecom and dairy development. In 1985, 165,000 villages had been identified as not having easy access to any potable water source. By 1989, 162,000 villages of these villages had been provided with at least one safe source of drinking water.

## Centre's U-Turn On Lateral Entry Amid Pressure From Ally, Opposition

**New Delhi:** The government today asked the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) to cancel its advertisement for lateral entry into bureaucracy, pulling a 180 amid massive opposition criticism of the move. Prime Minister Narendra Modi believes that the "move should be aligned with social justice", Union Minister Jitender Singh wrote in a letter to the UPSC chief. The UPSC last week issued the advertisement seeking "talented and motivated Indian nationals" for lateral recruitment to various senior positions within the Union government. These positions included Joint Secretary, Director, and Deputy Secretary in 24 ministries, with a total of 45 posts up for grabs. "While most of the major lateral entries before 2014 were made in an ad-hoc manner, including cases of alleged favouritism, efforts of our government have been to make the process institutionally driven, transparent and open," the minister's letter read. "The Prime Minister is of the firm belief that the process of lateral entry must be aligned with the principles of equity and social justice enshrined in our Constitution, particularly concerning the provisions of reservation."

Lateral entry into bureaucracy refers to the recruitment of individuals from outside the traditional government service cadres, such as the Indian Administrative Service (IAS), to fill mid and senior-level positions in government departments. The move triggered a debate on lateral entry into bureaucracy, with Congress leader Rahul Gandhi denouncing the process as an "attack on Dalits". The ruling BJP countered by pointing out that the concept emerged under a Congress-led government.

The lateral entry process was formally introduced during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's tenure, with the first set of vacancies announced in 2018. This marked a departure from the traditional system where senior bureaucratic positions were almost exclusively filled by career civil servants.

According to government sources, the idea was first proposed during the UPA government, led by Congress, in the mid-2000s. In 2005, the UPA established the Second Administrative Reforms Commission (ARC) under the chairmanship of Veerappa Moily. The Commission was tasked with recommending reforms to the Indian administrative system.

## Cancel lateral entry ad, Minister asks UPSC chief amid reservations row

**Jitendra Singh, in his letter to the UPSC, said there was a need for lateral entry to align with the principles of equity and social justice enshrined in the Constitution.**

**New Delhi:** Union Minister Jitendra Singh on Tuesday asked the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) to cancel its advertisement for lateral entry into top posts in central ministries amid backlash from the opposition as well as NDA allies. Jitendra Singh wrote the letter to

the UPSC chairperson citing Prime Minister Narendra Modi's directions. In his letter, Singh said there was a need for lateral entry to align with the principles of equity and social justice enshrined in the Constitution, particularly concerning the provision of reservations. The Congress, which had strongly criticised the ad as an "attack on Dalits, OBCs and Adivasis", was swift to react. "A letter from a Union Minister working under a non-biological PM to a Constitutional authority WITHOUT a date. What pathetic governance this is," Congress leader Jairam Ramesh tweeted. Last week, the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) sought applications for recruitment of 45 joint secretaries, directors and deputy secretaries in the biggest tranche of lateral entry in bureaucracy. It was aimed at appointing specialists, including those from the private sector, in central

government departments. The UPSC's announcement created a political stir, with at least two NDA partners -- the

Janata Dal (United) and Chirag Paswan's Lok Janshakti Party (LJP) -- joining the opposition ranks to oppose the move. Leader of the Opposition (LoP) Rahul Gandhi was the first to pounce on the BJP government, criticising it for the lack of reservations in appointments

made through lateral entry. "Lateral entry is an attack on Dalits, OBCs and Adivasis. The BJP's distorted version of Ram Rajya seeks to destroy the Constitution and snatch reservations from Bahujans," Gandhi had tweeted. BJP ally and Union Minister Chirag Paswan also voiced concern on appointments in government posts without reservation. "Reservation provisions must be there in any government appointment. There are no ifs and buts in this," he said. The Centre had mounted a strong defence, asserting that lateral entry in bureaucracy had been happening since the 1970s during Congress-led governments. Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said the move would not affect the recruitment of SC/STs in the services. Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal reminded the Congress that Manmohan Singh was made the finance secretary in 1976 through the lateral entry route.



# What's your style?

**It's tough to be a mother with so many relatives, experts, books and blogs ready to dole out advice. Leslie Ferris, parenting expert, who coaches parents of struggling teens and young adults, helps you navigate through the rhetoric to come up with your own style of effective parenting.**



## How to begin your mornings at 100 kph



Even the ultimate guidebook for mums will not tell you that motherhood is synonymous with chronic tardiness. It's true, children dilly-dally a lot and mums run behind them, but no one seems to get anywhere on time. To avoid the mad rush through the day, you need to ensure that your mornings run smoothly. Here are 12 smart ideas that'll help you speed up the mornings and for getting your kids (and yourself) out of the door on time.

### Be up first

We know you're tired, but being the first one out of bed can eliminate a big source of morning stress — getting your kids and yourself ready at the same time. This will help you have a relaxed start to the day; spend time preparing lunch and not scurrying to get things done.

### Warning signals

Many kids have a hard time stopping what they're doing and quickly changing course. To help them stay on schedule, give your kids 10-minute, 5-minute, and 2-minute departure warnings. Set a timer -- there are even talking ones on the market that will countdown the minutes for them. They may

not have learnt to read the clock, but it puts the idea in their heads that they're doing something else shortly, and they'll have to bring their current activity to a halt.

### Prepare the previous night

The key to getting out the door faster is to prepare the night before. Lay out your child's uniform, make sure their bags are packed, and ensure that they've completed their homework, and signed permission slips before they have called it a night.

Set up a morning routine It always helps to establish a morning routine. If it's breakfast time, they need to brush their teeth, eat and get dressed with no breaks in between. By doing the same things in the same order, children know what they need to do next and it becomes automatic for them.

Time your kids to see how long it takes to get out the door from the moment you say it's time to go. Allowing yourself enough time to get out the door will help you make a stress-free exit.

### Make portable breakfast

Serve up healthy, portable breakfast. Milk and cereals are always easy to rustle. Make sure you sprinkle a few almonds and walnuts in the bowl for an added

dose of vitamin. Poha, upma, are easy to prepare too. They can be carried around without messing your car. Make sure they have a tall glass of milk before they leave home. This will keep them going through the day.

### Get them to compete

For young kids with a competitive streak, this can work wonders. Tell them, the first one down (or up) the stairs is the superhero. Playing 'Who Can Do It First?' can help speed up everything from getting your kid dressed to getting them to school on

time.

### Switch off

If you're addicted to your smart phone, it can be hard to imagine starting the day unplugged. Parents must avoid checking emails and surfing the Internet before dropping off their kids to school in the morning. These create a huge black hole when it comes to time, because it's hard to just 'check one thing really quickly. Inevitably, you'll spend way more time online than you plan. Avoid watching news in the morning too, especially if it distracts your kids from getting going.

### Draw a family calendar

Keep everyone's schedule straight with one calendar that all family members can follow. It's a great visual way to consult your schedule. This will not only keep all the members in the loop, it will serve as a reminder. Knowing what your kid needs on what day will help you be more organised in the morning and avoid last minute rushing around.

### Early to bed

If you want a 'good' morning, make sure you call it an early night. Children should ideally have their dinner by 7 pm and sleep by 8.30 pm. They shouldn't spend too much time in front of the television as it affects the sleep pattern. No chocolate or other sweets before bedtime as it'll keep them up.

Notes on child's challenges Depending on your kid's age, there are some tasks he/she may not be able to do herself. In that case, figure out what duties trip her up. If tying her shoelaces takes her a long time, consider helping her in the morning instead of repeatedly nagging her to do it herself. If your son spills every time he

pours milk into his glass bowl, transfer the amount he needs into a small, easy-to-handle cup.

### Let them miss the bus

If your kids are older, let them experience the consequences of constant dilly-dallying. This could mean a red remark in the calendar. But it's okay; that's how they'll learn. If they are chronically late, then take it a step ahead and teach the brat a thorough lesson. Don't drive him to school, let him skip it and study at home. This strategy always works and we can vouch that the next time around he will always reach school on time.

### Cut out the dressing drama

Is getting your kid dressed for morning weekend hobby classes the most stressful part? We suggest buy a hanging closet bin and have your kid pick out his/her outfit for the week ahead of time the method, do everything you can to tame the tantrums and tears and reduce the amount of time it actually takes your kid to get dressed for the class.

## 10 ways to be a super daughter-in-law

One of the biggest challenges of married life is to get along well with your in-laws. Though this goes for both partners in a marriage, it is the woman who is affected the most.

According to research around 60 per cent of all marriages suffer from tension with mothers-in-law that is normally between the woman and her husband's mother. The nagging, meddling mother-in-law is often the cause of worry and the central idea that can help better the situation is to have a positive attitude and to show respect to the older woman.

**Positive attitude** Just like being a daughter-in-law is new to you taking up the role of a mother-in-law is new to her too. Always try and convey a positive attitude towards her. The older woman is probably just trying her best to fit into her role as a mom-in-law.

**Equality** Try to treat your mother-in-law and your mother equally. For example if you give your mother a

birthday gift, then give your mother-in-law a gift for her birthday too. If you have children, then visit your mother and your mother-in-law with similar frequency.

**Sensitivity** The fact that the lady has spent a significant part of her life raising her son may make her a little sensitive when another person becomes the centre of attraction of her son's life.

Though most mothers do not consider her daughter-in-law competition, there are some mothers who do. The ones whose life revolved around their child for a long time because they are a single parent or had only one child are the ones who are most likely to behave in this way. If, for example, your mother-in-law mentions how much her son always liked her home cooking, do not try to compete by asserting how much he likes your cooking now. This would invariably hurt her.

**Respect** Treat your mother-in-law with respect. Consider her older and wiser. She may have been through a lot of hardships in her life. In fact, talk to her and ask her about her childhood, growing up, raising kids, and life experiences. When she shares her life with you she will develop a liking for you and that can lead to a strong bond between the two of you.

**Expectations** Getting to know the family you have married into may take time. Though most daughters-in-law are welcomed into the family with open arms, do not get disheartened if it does not happen. Give them time to know you better.



**Be attentive** When your mother-in-law is at home be attentive towards her. Sit and chat, show her around town, and if she wants to help you prepare meals, then let her. You two can get to know each other better and bond. If she prefers to sit around being waited on hand and foot, then enlist your husband to help prepare meals and clean up.

**Information** Try to keep mother-in-law informed; call and let her know about important events. Keep her in the loop. If you have children, send pictures to your mother-in-law. Grandmothers love getting pictures of their grandchildren.

**Advice** Your mother-in-law has years of experience. Don't hesitate to take her advice. You may disagree with her and decide to not follow any of her suggestions, but be open to different ideas, at least listen, show respect, and do not take any advice as a personal attack. She is only trying to be helpful.

**Children** Allow your mother-in-law to take care of your children. For them their grandchildren are more important than their own kids sometimes. If she wants to, let her spoil them a little, i.e. she lets them stay slightly past their bedtime or gives them some more chocolate than you would want to.

**Communication** Try and talk out things with the family. If something that someone said hurt you, do not keep it bottled up inside you. Discuss with your husband and your mother-in-law any slights or snubs and how it makes you feel.

## Gold, silver price : Yellow metal records dip, silver trades higher on MCX

**New Delhi.** Precious metals showed mixed trends in the Indian markets today. Gold is trading on the lower side of the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX) while silver prices have recorded a hike on Tuesday, August 20. Gold futures, maturing on October 4, 2024, stood at Rs 71,569 per 10 grams, after recording a dip of Rs 15 or 0.02 per cent. The previous close was recorded at Rs 71,584. Meanwhile, silver futures, due on September 5, 2024, witnessed a hike of Rs 233 or 0.28 per cent and were retailing at Rs 84,571 per kg on the MCX against the previous close of Rs 84,338.

### GOLD AND SILVER PRICES IN MAJOR CITIES

The price of gold varies for different regions in the country based on certain parameters such as the excise duty, making charges and the state taxes.

### GOLD, SILVER PRICES IN INTERNATIONAL MARKET

Gold held steady near its record high on Tuesday as investors awaited U.S. Federal Reserve minutes and Chair Jerome Powell's speech for indications on how much the central bank will cut rates this year, news agency Reuters reported. According to the latest metal report, spot gold rose 0.2 per cent to \$2,500.08 per ounce by 0254 GMT, while, U.S. gold futures rose 0.1 per cent to \$2,537.70.

## Antfin to sell shares in Zomato worth Rs 3,400 cr



**NEW DELHI:** Antfin Singapore is reportedly looking to sell Zomato shares worth \$408 million or about Rs 3,400 crore. The arm of China's Ant Group is likely to offload 13.6 crore shares, or a 1.54% stake, via block deal on Tuesday. The deal is likely to take place at a floor price of 251.68 per share, a discount of 4% from Monday's closing price of Rs 262.3.

This would be the second time in 2024 that the Chinese investor is reducing its exposure in Zomato.

Antfin sold 9.7 crore shares of Zomato in March for Rs 2,827 crore. Antfin Singapore Holding held 37.38 Cr shares, or a 4.3% stake, in Zomato at the end of the June quarter of 2024, according to exchange data.

The fresh sale comes at a time when Zomato shares have been continuously hitting new highs on the bourses, supported by improved financial performance. The stock hit a high of Rs 280 on Monday after brokerage UBS raised its target to Rs 320 from Rs 260 earlier.

Analysts at UBS said Zomato surprised positively with not only stronger gross merchandise value growth in quick commerce but also a solid 27% growth in food delivery.

## Centre finalises draft rules for Digital Personal Data Protection Act, public consultation soon



"The framework is ready and the draft rules are expected to be released within a month," said Information Technology Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw.

**NEW DELHI.** The government has finalised the rules for the Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act and will release them soon for public consultation, said Electronic and Information Technology Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw on Monday. The minister, while speaking to the media, assured that the draft rules will be issued within the next 20 days, with the framework expected to be released within a month.

"The framework is ready and the draft rules are expected to be released within a month," said Vaishnaw.

The DPDP Act, passed by Parliament nearly a year ago, aims to prevent personal data breaches and provides specialised protections for children and persons with disabilities. However, its implementation has been delayed as many provisions require additional clauses and rules. The finalised rules will outline the workflow for filing complaints, appealing decisions, and other details. Notably, the Act defines a child as someone below the age of 18 and requires parental consent before processing the data of a minor, as mandated in Section 9. The government's move to release the rules for public consultation, likely before the end of August, marks a significant step towards implementing the DPDP Act and strengthening data protection in India.

**Aggarwal, who owns a 30.02% stake in the company, now holds shares valued at Rs 20,856 crore, or \$2.48 billion, based on the latest rupee-dollar exchange rate of 83.87.**

**New Delhi.** Ola Electric Mobility CEO Bhavish Aggarwal has seen his wealth surge to around Rs 21,000 crore, thanks to the stocks of Ola Electric which have doubled in price. Aggarwal, who owns a 30.02% stake in the company, now holds shares valued at Rs 20,856 crore, or \$2.48 billion, based on the latest rupee-dollar exchange rate of 83.87. This remarkable rise in his net worth follows the strong performance of Ola Electric's shares since

its debut on Dalal Street. Aggarwal's stake in Ola Electric consists of 1,32,39,60,029 shares. The recent spike in the stock price has boosted the value of his holdings considerably. On Tuesday, the stock reached a high of Rs 157.53 on the BSE, reflecting a 107% increase from the initial public offering (IPO) price of Rs 76 per share. In addition to his existing stake, Aggarwal had earlier sold 37,915,211 shares during the offer for sale at Rs 76 per share. This sale brought in Rs 288 crore, pushing his total net worth to Rs 21,144 crore. The sharp rise in Ola Electric's share price has come despite some conservative views on the penetration of electric vehicles (EVs) in India. HSBC, which recently began covering Ola Electric with a 'Buy' rating, had set a target price of Rs 140. However,



the stock quickly surpassed this target, reaching Rs 157.53 on Tuesday. HSBC's optimism about Ola Electric stems from the company's potential success in its battery venture. The bank suggested that Ola could produce batteries at a cost comparable to imported ones, or even at a lower price in a best-case scenario. This cost advantage could position Ola Electric favourably in the market,

especially as it strives to achieve global quality standards in battery manufacturing. The bank also noted that existing regulatory support for electric vehicles in India is likely to continue for another two to three years. During this period, the cost to manufacture an electric two-wheeler (e2W) could decrease by Rs 30,000-40,000, reaching Rs 70,000-75,000. This reduction in production costs could make electric vehicles competitive with traditional internal combustion engine (ICE) scooters, even if government subsidies are reduced from Rs 40,000 to Rs 10,000. Ola Electric Mobility, founded in 2017 and headquartered in Bengaluru, is a company focused solely on electric vehicles. The company not only manufactures electric vehicles but also produces key components such as battery packs, motors, and vehicle frames at its state-of-the-art Ola Futurefactory.

## Sensex, Nifty gain in early trade as IT stocks gain; Ola Electric shares fall

**New Delhi.** Benchmark stock market indices climbed in early trade on Tuesday, supported by gains in the information technology sector, as optimism grows that the US Federal Reserve may begin cutting interest rates by September. By 10:10 am, the NSE Nifty 50 had risen by 0.53% to 24,702.65, while the S&P BSE Sensex increased by 0.51% to 80,839.08. Ten of the thirteen key sectors saw gains, with IT stocks leading the way. The Nifty IT index rose 1.2%, supported by expectations that the US economy will likely avoid a recession, driving demand for Indian tech companies that generate a significant portion of their revenue.

Dr. V K Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Financial Services, said, "With eight straight days of gains in the US market is sending positive signals which can keep this global rally going. The Fed chief Powell's comments at Jackson Hole this Friday will be keenly watched by the markets." "The likely scenario is a 25

bp rate cut by the Fed in September followed by two more rate cuts this year. This can continue to support the equity markets globally and in India too," he added. Vijayakumar went on to add that the decline in Brent crude



below \$78 is a "macro positive for India," adding that "at the micro level this can lead to a mild rally in stocks of companies that use crude as input such as paints, adhesives and tyres." Among individual stocks, IndusInd Bank surged 2% after receiving regulatory approval to establish an asset management business, making it the top gainer in both the Nifty 50 and bank

indices. Financial stocks, including IndusInd Bank, rose by approximately 0.75%.

Polycab India gained 4% after UBS initiated coverage with a "buy" rating, citing long-term growth opportunities from electrification. On the other hand, Ola Electric shares fell after gaining 5% in early trade. The shares of the company have been in the limelight, having surged sharply after being listed on the stock markets. FII's may continue to sell in India since other emerging market valuations are relatively attractive and, therefore, the largecap financials where FII's hold large stakes may continue to remain under pressure," Vijayakumar said.

"Paradoxically, financials are the most attractive segment from the valuation perspective even though the struggle for deposits is keeping the sentiments negative for this segment. When the scenario changes there is a possibility of a sharp up move in financials," he added.

## At \$242 billion, India 12th largest holder of US treasuries in June

**MUMBAI.** Given the high yields that the US government debt has been offering since the interest rates there peaked to a multi-decadal high, the Reserve Bank has been ramping up its investments in the world's most sought-after public debt instrument. India's investment in these instruments touched a high of \$241.9 billion in June, the third straight month of rising exposure, making it the 12th largest entity owning American treasuries. In June 2023, the exposure was worth \$235.4 billion.

With the global financial crisis of 2007-08, which began in the US and pulled the global economy down into a long deep recession for nearly three years, the US Federal Reserve had slashed interest rates or Federal fund rates to zero to negative zone, and the gradually rose to nearly 2.5% till the pandemic-

induced inflation spike that had crossed 9%, the highest since the 1980s oil crisis. This forced the Fed to jack up rates and is now hovering around 5.25% — again a multi-decadal high, leading to a massive spike in treasury yields. This high treasury yields was the main reason for the RBI to earn its lifetime high profit last fiscal, leading to a windfall gain for the government as the central bank transferred as much as \$2.11 trillion in surplus transfers to the government in May this year.

Japan is the top holder worth over \$1.1 trillion, followed by China at the second spot with at \$780.2 billion in June (before Donald Trump came to power, China used to hold close to \$4 trillion worth of US treasuries), as per the latest data from the US treasury department. At the third place is

England with an exposure of \$741.5 billion, and the Luxembourg comes at the fourth slot with \$384.2 billion.

At the 11th position is Taiwan with an exposure of \$265.9 billion, followed by India at the 12th spot owning US government securities worth \$241.9 billion, higher than \$237.8 billion recorded in May. As per the data, India's holding is the highest in the last one year, and it was at \$237.8 billion in May 2024. In April this year, it went down to \$233.5 billion declining from \$240.6 billion in March. Among the other largest 10 holders of the US public debt are Canada at the fifth spot with \$374.8 billion, the Cayman Islands (\$319.4 billion), Belgium (\$318 billion), Ireland (\$308 billion), France (\$307.2 billion) and Switzerland (\$287.1 billion).

**MUMBAI.** Private capital expenditure, which has been missing for more than a decade after the investment spree during the later part of the first decade and the initial years of the second decade of the millennium, is finally back with the project finance pipeline. It suggests a significant increase in capital expenditure to Rs 2.45 lakh crore in the current fiscal, up from Rs 1.59 lakh crore in the previous 12 months. Rising domestic demand and capacity utilisation, improved profitability of corporate and healthier balance sheets of banks, sustained credit demand, business optimism and government's thrust on infrastructure development, along with policy measure to encourage investment activities, bode well for private capital investment cycle and reflects conducive investment climate and growth potential for the economy and facilitates economic progress, the Reserve Bank said in its latest bulletin released on Monday. However, the views in the bulletin articles are not of the authors and not of the central bank. The projection is based on an analysis of investment intentions of



private corporates on the basis of projects sanctioned by banks/financial institutions during fiscal 2024, wherein the total envisaged financing cost of projects reached a new high of Rs 3.91 lakh crore, of which, as much as 54% are to be invested by the year-end. The phasing profile of the projects finance pipeline suggests that the envisaged capex will increase significantly to Rs 2.45 lakh crore in 2024-25 from Rs 1.59 lakh crore in 2023-24," the article said. During FY24, about 944 projects got assistance from lenders with a record high total cost of projects of Rs 3,90,978 crore compared to 547 projects sanctioned during the previous year having total cost of Rs 2,66,546 crore.

During 2023-24, 438 private companies, which did not avail of any financing, raised Rs 1,68,396 crore through ECBs for capex purpose, while 123 other companies raised Rs 6,310 crore through domestic equity issuances under IPOs for funding their capex needs.

## Infosys may offer freshers pay packages up to Rs 9 lakh annually: Report

**NEW DELHI.** Information technology (IT) giant Infosys has introduced a new 'power programme' as part of its campus placement drive, offering freshers salaries of up to Rs 9 lakh per annum, reported The Economic Times quoting sources. This is significantly higher in comparison to the typical entry-level packages of Rs 3-3.5 lakh provided by the company. The differential hiring approach focuses on specialised skills such as coding, software development, and programming. Under the programme, Infosys offers salaries ranging from Rs 4.6 lakh to as high as Rs 9 lakh, depending on the candidate's skill level. This move is seen as Infosys' response to rival Tata Consultancy Services' (TCS) 'Prime' programme, which recruits freshers for software development roles with packages between Rs 9-11 lakh per annum. TCS has also expanded its 'Prime' programme to include roles in emerging technologies such as artificial



intelligence (AI), generative AI (GenAI), and machine learning (ML). TCS now recruits freshers under three categories: 'Ninja' with packages around Rs 3.6 lakh, 'Digital' at Rs 7.5 lakh, and 'Prime'. Both Infosys and TCS have increased their focus on hiring specialized talent as demand grows for

skills in cloud computing, AI/ML, and cybersecurity, driven by digital transformation projects. Despite a subdued macro environment, Infosys plans to hire between 15,000 and 20,000 graduates in FY25, while TCS aims to recruit 40,000 freshers, maintaining last year's numbers. Amid a

slowdown in the \$250-billion technology services sector, which resulted in a reduction of over 70,000 employees across India's top five IT companies in FY24, Infosys and TCS are ramping up hiring after a period of downsizing. TCS, for example, added 5,452 employees in the June quarter after reporting a net reduction in headcount for three consecutive quarters, including a 13,249 drop in FY24. Infosys, on the other hand, saw its headcount decrease by nearly 2,000 in the first quarter of FY25, bringing its total employee base to 315,332. Infosys has resumed both campus and off-campus fresher hiring, joining other top IT firms such as HCLTech and Wipro in bolstering their workforce. HCLTech plans to recruit 10,000 freshers in FY25, while Wipro is targeting up to 12,000 hires. Collectively, the top four IT companies are expected to add approximately 82,000 freshers this fiscal year.

## NEWS BOX

**Jannik Sinner wins Cincinnati crown after hammering Tiafoe, gears up for US Open**

**Ohio.** World number one Jannik Sinner secured a significant victory at the Cincinnati Open by defeating Frances Tiafoe 7-6(4), 6-2 in the final on Monday, August 19. This win not only marked his fifth title of the year but also positioned him as a top contender for the upcoming US Open in New York.

Sinner, who has been battling a hip issue and recently missed the Paris Olympics due to tonsillitis, showed resilience despite his recent health struggles. The 23-year-old Italian started the match cautiously, struggling with errors and even limping after several points in the tight first set. However, he regained his form during the tiebreak, successfully neutralizing Tiafoe's powerful serve on set point to take the opener. "It was a very difficult week, tough week. I'm very happy about today's match...It was very



tough mentally... We both felt a lot of tension, but I'm very glad about the level I played, especially in the important moments," Sinner said in the on-court interview after the match. Now, for sure, it's important to recover, to be to be ready for New York," Sinner added.

Tiafoe, who has faced challenges this season, had three break point opportunities in the first set but failed to capitalize. Sinner took advantage of Tiafoe's struggles, breaking his serve early in the second set and extending his lead to 4-1 with a forehand winner up the line. Sinner then sealed the match with an unreturnable serve on match point.

This victory at the Masters 1000 event in Cincinnati is particularly significant for Sinner, as it follows his Grand Slam breakthrough at the Australian Open earlier this year. Sinner's win in Ohio also makes him the youngest champion at the tournament since Andy Murray in 2008.

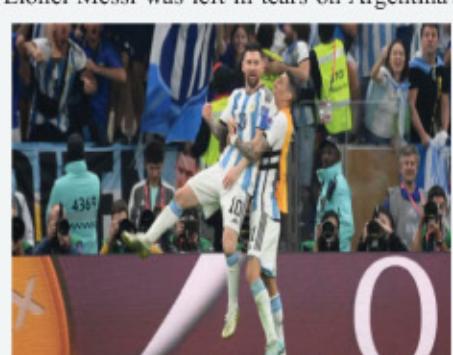
With the US Open just around the corner, Sinner's performance in Cincinnati sends a clear message to his competitors. Despite recent setbacks, Sinner has proven that he is still the player to beat, and he now shifts his focus to continuing his success on the grand stage in New York.

**No Lionel Messi, Angel di Maria in Argentina squad for first time in 11 years**

**New Delhi.** The transition period at the Argentina national team has well and truly begun. For the first time in 11 years, the football team squad will not include talismans Lionel Messi and Angel di Maria. Argentina announced their 28-man preliminary squad for matches against Chile and Colombia on Monday, 19 August. Lionel Scaloni's side did name all their top players, bar Messi, di Maria and Paulo Dybala.

**Advertisement**  
The last time both players were not named in the squad was in a 2014 World Cup qualifier against Uruguay in 2013, when the Argentine team had already qualified for the showpiece tournament. While Angel di Maria has already announced his retirement from international football, Messi is reported to be recovering from his injury sustained in the Copa America Final.

Lionel Messi was left in tears on Argentina's



bench after being substituted due to an injury during the Copa America final against Colombia on July 15. The 37-year-old exited the match with a non-contact injury after chasing the ball on defence, limping off the pitch in tears. Earlier in the match, Messi had gone down with an apparent leg injury while attempting to kick the ball before it went out of bounds. He planted his right leg awkwardly and seemed to make contact with Colombia's Santiago Arias. Messi writhed in pain, clutching his lower right leg, and rolled over several times. Trainers attended to him for a few minutes before helping him to his feet. He walked slowly towards the sideline but later reentered the game. Messi had been dealing with a leg injury and discomfort throughout much of the tournament, causing him to miss Argentina's group-stage finale. He managed one shot attempt in the first half in the game.

The talismanic forward has since missed his matches for Inter Miami at the Leagues Cup and Major League Soccer.

**Stefanos Tsitsipas asks ChatGPT to roast him, tennis star shares hilarious response**

**New Delhi.** Greek tennis star Stefanos Tsitsipas seems to have made the most of his time away from the game. After an early exit from the Cincinnati Masters, Tsitsipas sought the help of Artificial Intelligence to 'roast' him. Yes, you read that right. The World No. 11 took to social media to share the response of the AI chatbot, ChatGPT, when he asked it to roast him. The chatbot's response playfully highlighted Stefanos Tsitsipas's ability to serve up pearls of philosophy on social media and complemented his hairstyle. "Stefanos Tsitsipas: the guy who spends more time philosophizing on Twitter than actually serving up a solid second serve. He's the only player who can turn a simple changeover into a TED Talk on Greek mythology and still come back to the court with his shoelaces untied. Maybe if he spent less time perfecting his Instagram captions and more time working on his backhand slice, he'd have a few more trophies by now. But hey, at least, his hair



game is winning, even if his forehand occasionally forgets what direction it's supposed to go," the AI chatbot said, according to the tennis player. Tsitsipas's social media post led to more funny responses with several of his fans appreciating his sense of humour.

Stefanos Tsitsipas has been struggling to emulate his best in the ongoing season. The former

Australian Open and French Open runner-up was knocked out in the second round of Cincinnati Masters after a controversial match against Jack Draper. Tsitsipas reached the quarter-final of the French Open, but he was knocked out in the second round of the Wimbledon. Tsitsipas ended his collaboration with his father Apostolos as his coach earlier in the month.

**Ishant Sharma raring to make a mark in DPL: 'Need little more time to prepare'**

**UPDATED** Purani Dilli 6 pacer Ishant Sharma is eager to get back on the field and showcase his skills in the ongoing Delhi Premier League (DPL) here at the iconic Shri Arun Jaitley Stadium in New Delhi. Purani Dilli 6 is locking horns with East Delhi Riders on Tuesday and will meet West Delhi Lions on Wednesday. Ishant last played a white-ball match in IPL 2024 but is now looking forward to step on the field in the DPL. "Preparation for DPL has been good. I didn't get much time to practice after the IPL. Just a little more preparations for my franchise and I'll be ready to take the field in DPL. You all will see me bowling in the coming games for Purani Dilli 6," Ishant Sharma said in a statement. Ishant has been guiding the young players through his vast experience. The young lads of Purani Dilli 6 are making the most of their stay with Ishant

Sharma. "My message for young players is to keep working hard and believe in your abilities, this format might be cruel but if you trust your abilities and work hard you can do wonders in any format," Ishant said last week. Purani Dilli



6's team owner Akash Nangia said, "Ishant Sharma brings a wealth of experience to Purani Dilli 6. His guidance and mentorship are invaluable to our younger players. Having someone of his calibre in the squad enhances the learning curve for the entire team."

**Na Seats The, Na Bathrooms': PCB Chief's Accepts as Pakistan Stadiums Get Ready to Host 2025 Champions Trophy**

**Lahore, Pakistan** Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman Mohsin Naqvi after a recent trip to Lahore for a visit of Gaddafi Stadium, accepted the vast difference in stands between stadium in Pakistan and other international venues.

Naqvi visited Lahore's Gaddafi Stadium to check the infrastructure and said the responsibility to improve the facilities, ahead of the 2025 Champions Trophy, lies with the PCB. He also pointed out the challenges the Pakistan board would face if the entire stadium were to be renovated. There was a world of difference between our stadiums and those in the rest of the world. In no way were they international stadiums; koi bhi stadiums internationally qualify kaar hi nahi shkta tha — na seats the, na bathrooms aur view aasa tha ki aap 500 metre door se dekh rahe hai (none of them could qualify as international by any standard — there



were enough seats or bathrooms, and the view made it seem like you were watching from 500 meters away," Naqvi said. The Frontier Works Organisation (FWO) team is working day and night. We will make our stadiums one of the best in the world. Providing basic facilities in stadiums is our first priority," he added. The PCB chief remains hopeful that the Gaddafi Stadium will host some marquee clashes next year during the Champions Trophy. According to reports, PCB has allocated approximately PKR 17 billion for renovating cricket stadiums at their three main centers ahead of the Champions Trophy. Meanwhile, the ongoing renovation of the National Bank Stadium in Karachi has forced the Pakistan Cricket Board to move the second test against Bangladesh to Rawalpindi. The PCB said it did not want to interrupt the renovation work at the stadium because it wanted the venue to be operationally ready for the Champions Trophy in time. Pakistan is due to host the Champions Trophy from Feb. 19, 2025.

**Former Australia batter David Warner has committed to his first full Big Bash League season after rejoining Sydney Thunder on a 2-year deal, after retiring from international cricket. Warner will be playing alongside other Australian cricket stars in BBL 14.**

**New Delhi.** David Warner has committed to playing his first full Big Bash League (BBL) season after signing a two-year deal with the Sydney Thunder. The former Australian opener, who retired from international cricket earlier this year, will don the lime green for the entire duration of BBL14, marking a significant boost for the Thunder. Warner's previous stints with the team have been limited due to his commitments with the Australian national



team, but this time, fans will see him in action throughout the season. 37-year-old David Warner has been a key player for the Thunder since his BBL debut in 2011, where he made history by scoring the team's first century, an unbeaten 102 off 51 balls against the Sydney Sixers. Over the years, he has played ten matches for the Thunder, amassing 301 runs at an average of 37.62 and

a strike rate of 135.58. "I've always been part of the Thunder... I really liked the environment last year (at the Thunder), I gelled back with the boys and I just love playing cricket," Warner said on his decision to re-sign with the franchise. "The group of guys that we had last season really brought a lot of energy, we had a lot of fun on the field, but off the field we gelled very well together and this year, I think we can go a couple of steps better and play some good cricket. In addition to Warner, the Thunder will feature other prominent players, including England wicketkeeper Sam Billings, rising star Ollie Davies, and Warner's former Test opening partner Cameron Bancroft. Warner's availability for the entire season comes after his retirement from international cricket, allowing him to focus fully on the BBL.

**Aryna Sabalenka thumps Jessica Pegula to clinch iconic Cincinnati Open crown**

**New York.** Aryna Sabalenka showcased her formidable power and precision to defeat American Jessica Pegula 6-3, 7-5 and win the Cincinnati Open on Monday. This victory marks Sabalenka's sixth WTA 1000 title and sends a strong message ahead of the upcoming U.S. Open. Sabalenka, a two-time Australian Open champion, dominated the match with her powerful serve, dropping only nine points on serve and delivering 10 aces.

Despite some late jitters in the second set, she maintained control throughout the match. Pegula, who had been in excellent form after winning the Toronto Open earlier this month, struggled with her serve, committing five double faults. Her nine-match winning streak came to an end as she couldn't withstand Sabalenka's relentless pressure. "I want to thank my team -- we've been through a lot but we never stopped working, never



stopped improving ourselves and I'm really happy to have you by my side," Sabalenka said during her on-court interview after the match. The Belarusian secured the first break in the fourth game when Pegula netted a forehand, and she quickly built on that momentum to take the first set. In the second set, Sabalenka broke Pegula's serve in the

opening game with a series of powerful forehands. Although she faltered briefly, allowing Pegula a break point in the 10th game, Sabalenka quickly regained her composure, breaking back immediately and sealing the victory. With this win, Sabalenka will rise to number two in the rankings, solidifying her status as a top contender for the U.S. Open. She cruised through the Cincinnati tournament without dropping a set, including a victory over world number one Iga Swiatek, positioning herself as one of the favourites in New York after finishing as runner-up last year.

Sabalenka's dominant performance in Cincinnati underscores her readiness to challenge for the year's final Grand Slam title.

**Naseem Shah opens up on World Cup loss vs India: 'Could not put up with it anymore'**

**Naseem Shah opens up on losing against India in T20 World Cup 2024**

**→ Pakistan were hammered by fans and experts after their loss**

**→ Pakistan had failed to chase down 120 runs in New York**

**New Delhi.** Pakistan fast bowler Naseem Shah has opened up on the hurt caused by the team's loss against India in the T20 World Cup 2024. Pakistan fell to an embarrassing loss in the group stage of the tournament

against their arch-rivals in New York, failing to chase 120 runs at the Nassau County Stadium. The team was subjected to intense scrutiny after that game - one that essentially knocked them out of the tournament. In fact, Pakistan Cricket Board president - Mohsin Naqvi - had said that the cricketing structure needed major surgery after the way the team had played against USA and India. Shah, speaking to Cricbuzz ahead of their Bangladesh Test series said that at point of time, he felt that he could not take the criticism anymore. "Though I was not being targeted by the fans or the media, one cannot be satisfied and say I did my bit after your team loses. I am a person who wants to win. I get disappointed even when I lose while



playing at home or in my street. I play to win and the World Cup exit pained me a lot," the tearaway fast bowler said Cricbuzz in an interview. "People come up to me in restaurants and ask me why we lost. Even my

relatives have asked about it. I understand their sentiments are driven by social media and, as a player, all I can do is listen to them," he further added. Naseem however agreed that it was the hard losses and the criticism that motivated him to do better and make a comeback. "There are times when you feel that you cannot put up with it anymore. But, it also burns a desire for a comeback. People had many questions to ask and there was a lot of frustration in them, which is understandable. Now, we have an opportunity to win the hearts again by playing good cricket," the fast bowler concluded on the matter. Pakistan are playing 2 Test matches against Bangladesh. The first Test begins on August 21.

Bangladesh Violence

# Rashami Desai's

## Reaction To Video Of Hindu Girl Being Attacked Viral

**B**angladesh is in turmoil after former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina fled her country. The nation is currently in chaos due to violence and political instability. The minorities especially Hindus are at the centre of the atrocities by the majorities of the nation. Numerous TV and Bollywood celebs have reacted to the ongoing violence in Bangladesh. In the list of the actors who raised their voices against such atrocities, actress Rashami Desai is the new name in the list. Uttaran fame actress took the stand for a Hindu girl who was allegedly attacked and thrown in the pond. Rashami Desai shared a video of a Hindu girl who was allegedly attacked by the Muslims of Bangladesh. The screenshot of the story read that a group of Muslims caught a Hindu girl, insulted her and threw her in the pond. Angered by the post, Rashami Desai wrote, "Why humans are trying to become God or a demon? There is a lot to face in life. Karma comes back," with a

heartbreak emoji. The video was posted by a news channel named United India News.

Rashami, who hails from Assam, started her acting career in 2002 with the Assamese film Kanyadaa. She made her Bollywood debut with the romantic mystery Yeh Lamhe Judai Ke alongside Shah Rukh Khan and Raveena

Tandon in 2004. The 38-year-old actress has also worked in several Bhojpuri films like Kab Hoi Gawna Hamar, Sohagan Bana Da Sajana Hamaar, Nadiya Ke Teer, Gazab Bhai Rama and Bhojpuri films like Kangana Khanke Piya Ke Angna.

Rashami Desai made her television debut with the Hindi mythological drama series Raavan in 2006. She played the role of Rani Mandodari. She got her first big break with the serial Pari Hoon Main in 2008. She played a double role in the film. Rashami Desai was also the winner of the reality show Zara Nachke Dikha 2 and later participated in Jhalak Dikhhla Jaa, Comedy Ka Maha Muqabla, Fear Factor: Khatron Ke Khiladi 6, Nach Baliye, Bigg Boss 13 and Bigg Boss 15. She was last seen in the show Entertainment Ki Raat Housefull and the film JNU: Jahangir National University.



### Vicky Kaushal

# Rashmika Mandanna

## Confirm Film Teaser To Drop On THIS Date

**T**he teaser for Chhava, featuring Vicky Kaushal as the brave Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj, is set to release on August 19. The teaser was shown before Stree 2, and it has already sent fans into a frenzy. The first look is a visual feast with intense war scenes, offering a powerful introduction to Vicky as the formidable son of the legendary Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. The actors took to social media to share the title of the film and mentioned that the teaser will officially be out tomorrow. The teaser, that was attached to Stree 2, features intense war scenes, showcasing Vicky Kaushal in a powerful and commanding role. His portrayal of the Maratha emperor is both regal and convincing. While comparisons to Ranveer Singh's role in Bajirao Mastani may arise, Vicky's performance aims to stand out on its own. In Chhava, Vicky Kaushal takes on the challenging role of Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj, while Rashmika Mandanna stars as his wife, Yesubai Bhonsale. Set to release on December 6, the film wrapped up filming earlier this year and is already generating a lot of buzz.

Directed by Laxman Utekar, known for his work in films like Mimi (2021) and Luka Chuppi (2019), Chhava marks another collaboration between Utekar and Vicky Kaushal following their recent comedy-romance hit Zara Hatke Zara Bachke (2023). Chhava is a historical drama that revolves around the life of Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj, the son of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. In the film, Vicky Kaushal is set to portray the character of Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj, the eldest son of the Maratha empire's founder. On the other hand, Rashmika Mandanna takes on the role of Yesubai Bhonsale in the film. The film also stars Akshaye Khanna, Ashutosh Rana, and Divya Dutta in key roles. According to a report by Pinkvilla, actor Neil Bhoopalam has also been roped in to portray the character of a Mughal prince in the film.



Vedang Raina Says Working With Alia Bhatt Is 'Confusing', Calls Jigra Co-star 'Polar Opposite' Of Himself



**A**lia Bhatt has been on a roll with back-to-back commercial and critical success. From Gangubai Kathiawadi to Darlings, Brahmastra to Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani, the actress has also managed to create a space for herself amid the international audience with Hear Of Stone. The actress will now be seen with Vedang Raina in Jigra. In a recent chat with GQ, Vedang opened up about working with Alia Bhatt. He said, "She's the polar opposite of me as an actor, and honestly, it's so confusing! Watching her, it's clear she's brilliant and makes a significant impact. I come in with extensive preparation, setting the mood with my playlist and sitting in a corner, immersing myself in the scene. Then, Alia arrives, and bam! She nails it in the first take, and I'm left amazed."

Vedang added, "She gets into character instantly, everything is sharp and precise. It's a testament to her professionalism after spending years in the industry. I've learned so much from her—lessons that are hard to quantify but are absorbed subconsciously. It's incredible how much you can gain from observing someone you admire." When asked how it was working with the Archies actor, Alia Bhatt had earlier told News18 Showsha exclusively, "Vedang is just sublime. He plays my brother in the film. I am not going to say much about the relationship we share in the film, but I can definitely say that we had a very seamless, easy-going work relationship."

It was widely reported that Vedang and Alia will be playing siblings in the film. When asked about this, Vedang had previously told The Indian Express, "Everyone keeps asking me this, but I am not sure what it is about. It sounds very exciting to play a sibling to Alia Bhatt." Jigra is directed by Vasan Bala and is produced by Karan Johar. Alia Bhatt is also co-producing the film along with Karan.

**Shah Rukh Khan Beams With Happiness As Anushka Sharma Sings 'Haule Haule' in Viral Video; Watch Now**



**A**nushka Sharma, who made her stunning Bollywood debut alongside Shah Rukh Khan in 'Rab Ne Bana Di Jodi', continues to be a fan favorite. Interestingly, her last film, 'Zero', also featured SRK in the lead. As anticipation builds for her return to the big screen, a nostalgic video from the 'Rab Ne Bana Di Jodi' promotions has resurfaced and gone viral on X (formerly Twitter). The clip captures a charming moment where Anushka sings the beloved 'Haule Haule' song while Shah Rukh Khan looks on, unable to hide his smile. In the video, shared by a devoted fan, SRK playfully asks Anushka about her favorite song from the movie, to which she promptly replies, 'Haule Haule.' With an infectious smile, she begins singing the song and even performs its iconic hook step. As she encourages Shah Rukh to join in, he adorably admits that he doesn't remember the dance move, but he can't help but compliment her, saying, "People say you dance wonderfully."

This heartwarming interaction is a reminder of the magical chemistry between SRK and Anushka, who have shared the screen in four films: Rab Ne Bana Di Jodi (2008), Jab Tak Hai Jaan (2012), Jab Harry Met Sejal (2017), and Zero (2018). Their on-screen pairing has been adored by audiences, with 'Rab Ne Bana Di Jodi' being one of the highest-grossing films of 2008 and a major milestone in Anushka's career. Released on December 12, 2008, the film remains one of Bollywood's most cherished romantic comedies, with both Shah Rukh's dual role as Surinder Sahni and Raj and Anushka's portrayal of Taani Gupta winning hearts. The film's music, featuring hits like 'Haule Haule,' 'Dance Pe Chance,' and 'Tujhme Rab Dikhta Hai,' continues to be a favorite among fans. As Anushka gears up for her next project, 'Chakda Xpress', a biopic of former Indian cricketer Jhulan Goswami, the excitement for her return is palpable. Directed by Prosit Roy, the film's release date is eagerly awaited. Meanwhile, SRK will soon be seen in King, which will reportedly star his daughter Suhana Khan and Munjya star Abhay Verma.